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GYMBELINE



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

'*The Tragedie of Cymbeline*' was first printed in the folio collection of 1623. The play is very carefully divided into acts and scenes—an arrangement which is sometimes wanting in other plays of this edition. Printed as '*Cymbeline*' must have been from a manuscript, the text, although sometimes difficult, presents few examples of absolute error.

In '*Cymbeline*,' we are thrown back into the half-fabulous history of our own country, and see all objects under the dim light of uncertain events and manners. We have civilisation contending with semi-barbarism; the gorgeous worship of the Pagan world subduing to itself the more simple worship of the Druidical times; kings and courtiers surrounded with the splendour of "barbaric pearl and gold;" and, even in those days of simplicity, a wilder and a simpler life, amidst the fastnesses of mountains, and the solitude of caves—the hunters' life, who "have seen nothing," but who yet, in their natural piety, know "how to adore the heavens." If these attributes of the drama had been less absorbing, we perhaps might have more readily seen the real course of the dramatic action. We venture to express our opinion, that one predominant idea does exist.

The dialogue of the "two Gentlemen" in the opening scene makes us perfectly acquainted with the relations in which Posthumus and Imogen stand to each other, and to those around them. "She's wedded, her husband banish'd." We have next the character of

the banished husband, and of the unworthy suitor who is the cause of his banishment; as well as the story of the king's two lost sons. This is essentially the foundation of the past and future of the action. Brief indeed is this scene, but it well prepares us for the parting of Posthumus and Imogen. The course of their affections is turned awry by the wills of others. The angry king at once proclaims himself to us as one not cruel, but weak; he has before been described as "touch'd at very heart." It is only in the intensity of her affection for Posthumus that Imogen opposes her own will to the impatient violence of her father, and the more capricious decision of her step-mother. But she is surrounded with a third evil,—

"A father cruel, and a step-dame false,
A foolish suitor to a wedded lady."

Worse, however, even than these, her honour is to be assailed, her character vilified, by a subtle stranger; who, perhaps more in sport than in malice, has resolved to win a paltry wager by the sacrifice of her happiness and that of her husband. What has she to oppose to all this complication of violence and cunning? Her perfect purity—her entire simplicity—her freedom from everything that is selfish—the strength only of her affections. The scene between Iachimo and Imogen is a contest of innocence with guile, most profoundly affecting, in spite of the few coarsenesses that were perhaps unavoidable, and which were not considered offensive in Shakspeare's day.

This is the First Act; and, if we mistake not the object of Shakspeare, these opening scenes exhibit one of the most confiding and gentle of human beings, assailed

on every side by a determination of purpose, whether in the shape of violence, wickedness, or folly, against which, under ordinary circumstances, innocence may be supposed to be an insufficient shield. But the very helplessness of Imogen is her protection. In the exquisite Second Scene of the Second Act, the perfect purity of Imogen, as interpreted by Shakspeare, has converted what would have been a most dangerous situation in the hands of another poet, into one of the most refined delicacy.—The immediate danger is passed; but there is a new danger approaching. The will of her unhappy husband, deceived into madness, is to be added to the evils which she has already received from violence and selfishness. Posthumus, intending to destroy her, writes "Take notice that I am in Cambria at Milford-Haven; what your own love will out of this advise you, follow." She does follow her own love;—she has no other guide but the strength of her affections; that strength makes her hardy and fearless of consequences. It is the one duty, as well as the one pleasure, of her existence. How is that affection requited? Pisanio places in her hand, when they have reached the deepest solitude of the mountains, that letter by which he is commanded to take away her life. One passing thought of herself—one faint reproach of her husband,—and she submits to the fate which is prepared for her.—But her truth and innocence have already subdued the will of the sworn servant of her husband. He comforts her, but he necessarily leaves her in the wilderness. The spells of evil wills are still around her:—

"My noble mistress,
Here is a box, I had it from the queen."

Perhaps there is nothing in Shakspeare more beautifully managed,—more touching in its romance,—more essentially true to nature,—than the scenes between Imogen and her unknown brothers. The gentleness, the grace, the “grief and patience,” of the helpless Fidele, producing at once the deepest reverence and affection in the bold and daring mountaineers, still carry forward the character of Imogen under the same aspects. “The bird is dead;” she was sick, and we almost fear that the words of the dirge are true.—But she awakes, and she has still to endure the last and the worst evil—her husband, in her apprehension, lies dead before her. She has no wrongs to think of—“O, my lord, my lord,” is all, in connexion with Posthumus, that escapes amidst her tears. The beauty and innocence which saved her from Iachimo,—which conquered Pisanio,—which won the wild hunters,—commend her to the Roman general—she is at once protected. But she has holy duties still to perform.—It is the unconquerable affection of Imogen which makes us pity Posthumus even while we blame him for the rash exercise of his revengeful will. But in his deep repentance we more than pity him. We see only another victim of worldly craft and selfishness.—In the prison scene his spirit is again united with her.—The contest we now feel is over between the selfish and the unselfish, the crafty and the simple, the proud and the meek, the violent and the gentle.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CYMBELINE, King of Britain.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 5.
Act IV. sc. 3. Act V. sc. 5.*

CLOTEN, son to the Queen, by a former husband.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1;
sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 2.*

LEONATUS POSTHUMUS, husband to Imogen.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 4; sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1
sc. 2; sc. 3; sc. 4; sc. 5.*

**BELARIUS, a banished lord, disguised under the name
of Morgan.**

*Appears, Act III. sc. 3; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act V.
sc. 2; sc. 5.*

**GUIDERIUS, son to Cymbeline, disguised under the
name of Polydore, supposed son to Belarius.**

*Appears, Act III. sc. 3; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act V.
sc. 2; sc. 5.*

**ARVIRAGUS, son to Cymbeline, disguised under the
name of Cadwal, supposed son to Belarius.**

*Appears, Act III. sc. 3; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act V.
sc. 2; sc. 5.*

PHILARIO, a Roman, friend to Posthumus.

Appears, Act I. sc. 5. Act II. sc. 4.

IACHIMO, a Roman, friend to Posthumus.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 5; sc. 7. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act V.
sc. 2; sc. 5.*

A French Gentleman, friend to Philario.

Appears, Act I. sc. 5.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CAIUS LUCIUS, *general of the Roman forces.*

Appears, Act III. sc. 1; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 2;
sc. 5.

A Roman Captain.

Appears, Act IV. sc. 2.

Two British Captains.

Appear, Act V. sc. 2.

PISANIO, *gentleman to Posthumus.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6; sc. 7. Act II. sc. 2. Act III.
sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act IV. sc. 3. Act V. sc. 5.

CORNELIUS, *a physician.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 6. Act V. sc. 5.

Two Gentlemen of Cymbeline's Court

Appear, Act I. sc. 1.

Two Gaolers.

Appear, Act V. sc. 4.

QUEEN, *wife to Cymbeline.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 2; sc. 6. Act II. sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1; sc. 5.

IMOGEN, *daughter to Cymbeline, by a former Queen.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 7. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 3.
Act III. sc. 2, sc. 4; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1.

HELEN, *woman to Imogen.*

Appears, Act II. sc. 2.

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, Apparitions, a Soothsayer, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE,—SOMETIMES IN BRITAIN; SOMETIMES
IN ROME.

CYMBELINE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Britain. *The Garden behind Cymbeline's Palace.*

Enter Two Gentlemen.

1 *Gent.* You do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods

No more obey the heavens, than our courtiers
Still seem as does the king.^a

2 *Gent.* But what 's the matter?

1 *Gent.* His daughter, and the heir of his kingdom,
whom

He purpos'd to his wife's sole son, (a widow,
That late he married,) hath referr'd herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman: She 's wedded;
Her husband banish'd; she imprison'd: all
Is outward sorrow; though, I think, the king
Be touch'd at very heart.

2 *Gent.* None but the king?

1 *Gent.* He that hath lost her, too: so is the queen,
That most desir'd the match: But not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the king's looks, hath a heart that is not
Glad at the thing they scowl at.

^a *Blood* is used by Shakspeare for natural disposition. The meaning of the passage then is—You do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods do not more obey the heavens than our courtiers still seem as the king seems.

2 *Gent.* And why so?

1 *Gent.* He that hath miss'd the princess is a thing
Too bad for bad report: and he that hath her,
(I mean, that married her,—alack, good man!—
And therefore banish'd,) is a creature such
As to seek through the regions of the earth
For one his like, there would be something failing
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an outward, and such stuff within,
Endows a man but he.

2 *Gent.* You speak him far.*

1 *Gent.* I do extend^b him, sir, within himself;
Crush him together, rather than unfold
His measure duly.

2 *Gent.* What's his name, and birth?

1 *Gent.* I cannot delve him to the root: His father
Was call'd Sicilius, who did join his honour,
Against the Romans, with Cassibelan;
But had his titles by Tenantius, whom
He serv'd with glory and admir'd success:
So gain'd the sur-addition, Leonatus:
And had, besides this gentleman in question,
Two other sons, who, in the wars o' the time,
Died with their swords in hand; for which, their father
(Then old and fond of issue) took such sorrow
That he quit being; and his gentle lady,
Big of this gentleman, our theme, deceas'd
As he was born. The king, he takes the babe
To his protection; calls him Posthumus Leonatus;
Breeds him, and makes him of his bed-chamber:
Puts to him all the learnings that his time
Could make him the receiver of; which he took,

* You carry your praise far.

^b The *Gentleman* says—I do *extend* him—appreciate his good qualities—but only within the real limits of what they are: instead of *unfolding* his measure duly, I crush him together—compress his excellence.

As we do air, fast as 't was ministered,
And in 's spring became a harvest: Liv'd in court,
(Which rare it is to do,) most prais'd, most lov'd:
A sample to the youngest; to th' more mature
A glass that feated them; and to the graver,
A child that guided dotards: to his mistress—
For whom he now is banish'd,—her own price
Proclaims how she esteem'd him and his virtue;
By her election may be truly read
What kind of man he is.

2 *Gent.* I honour him
Even out of your report. But, 'pray you, tell me,
Is she sole child to the king?

1 *Gent.* His only child.
He had two sons, (if this be worth your hearing,
Mark it,) the eldest of them at three years old,
I' the swathing clothes the other, from their nursery
Were stolen; and to this hour no guess in knowledge
Which way they went.

2 *Gent.* How long is this ago?

1 *Gent.* Some twenty years.

2 *Gent.* That a king's children should be so convey'd!
So slackly guarded! And the search so slow,
That could not trace them!

1 *Gent.* Howsoe'er 't is strange,
Or that the negligence may well be laugh'd at,
Yet is it true, sir.

2 *Gent.* I do well believe you.

1 *Gent.* We must forbear: Here comes the gentle-
man,
The queen, and princess. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*The same.*

Enter the QUEEN, POSTHUMUS, and IMOGEN.

Queen. No, be assur'd, you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most step-mothers,

Evil-ey'd unto you: you are my prisoner, but
Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys
That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus,
So soon as I can win the offended king,
I will be known your advocate: marry, yet
The fire of rage is in him; and 't were good,
You lean'd unto his sentence, with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you.

Post. Please your highness,
I will from hence to-day.

Queen. You know the peril:—
I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barr'd affections; though the king
Hath charg'd you should not speak together.

[*Exit QUEEN.*]

Imo. O dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where she wounds!—My dearest husband,
I something fear my father's wrath; but nothing
(Always reserv'd my holy duty,) what
His rage can do on me: You must be gone;
And I shall here abide the hourly shot
Of angry eyes; not comforted to live,
But that there is this jewel in the world,
That I may see again.

Post. My queen! my mistress!
O, lady, weep no more; lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness
Than doth become a man! I will remain
The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth.
My residence in Rome, at one Philario's;
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter: thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send,
Though ink be made of gall.

Re-enter QUEEN.

Queen.

Be brief, I pray you:

If the king come, I shall incur I know not
 How much of his displeasure. Yet I'll move him
[Aside

To walk this way I never do him wrong,
 But he does buy my injuries to be friends,*
 Pays dear for my offences [Exit

Post Should we be taking leave
 As long a term as yet we have to live,
 The loathness to depart would grow Adieu!

Imo Nay, stay a little.
 Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
 Such parting were too petty Look here, love,
 This diamond was my mother's take it, heart,
 But keep it till you woo another wife,
 When Imogen is dead

Post How! how! another?—
 You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
 And sear up my embracements from a next
 With bonds of death!—Remain thou here
[Putting on the ring
 While sense can keep it on! And sweetest, fairest,
 As I my poor self did exchange for you,
 To your so infinite loss, so, in our trifles
 I still win of you For my sake wear this,
 It is a manacle of love I'll place it
 Upon this fairest prisoner

[Putting a bracelet on her arm
Imo O, the gods!
 When shall we see again?

Enter CYMBELINE and Lords

Post Alack, the king!

Cym Thou basest thing, avoid! hence, from my
 sight!

* This sentence is obscure but the meaning of the crafty Queen appears to be that the kindness of her husband even when she is doing him wrong, purchases injuries as if they were benefits

If after this command thou fraught the court
With thy unworthiness, thou diest : Away !
Thou art poison to my blood.

Post. The gods protect you !
And bless the good remainders of the court !
I am gone. [Exit.]

Imo. There cannot be a pinch in death
More sharp than this is.

Cym. O disloyal thing,
That shouldst repair my youth ; thou heapest
A year's age on me !

Imo. I beseech you, sir,
Harm not yourself with your vexation ; I
Am senseless of your wrath ; a touch more rare ^a
Subdues all pangs, all fears.

Cym. Past grace ? obedience ?

Imo. Past hope, and in despair ; that way, past grace.

Cym. That mightst have had the sole son of my
queen !

Imo. O bless'd, that I might not ! I chose an eagle,
And did avoid a puttock.^b

Cym. Thou took'st a beggar ; wouldst have made
my throne
A seat for baseness.

Imo. No ; I rather added
A lustre to it.

Cym. O thou vile one !

Imo. Sir,
It is your fault that I have lov'd Posthumus :
You bred him as my playfellow ; and he is
A man worth any woman ; overbuys me
Almost the sum he pays.

Cym. What ! art thou mad ?

Imo. Almost, sir : Heaven restore me !—'Would I
were

^a A higher feeling.

^b *Puttock*—a kite—a worthless species of hawk.

A neat-herd's daughter! and my Leonatus
Our neighbour shepherd's son!

Re-enter QUEEN.

Cym. Thou foolish thing!—
They were again together: you have done
Not after our command. Away with her,
And pen her up. [*To the QUEEN.*

Queen. 'Beseech your patience:—Peace,
Dear lady daughter, peace.—Sweet sovereign,
Leave us to ourselves; and make yourself some comfort
Out of your best advice.

Cym. Nay, let her languish
A drop of blood a day; and, being aged,
Die of this folly! [*Exit.*

Enter PISANIO.

Queen. Fye!—you must give way:
Here is your servant.—How now, sir? What news?

Pis. My lord your son drew on my master.

Queen. Ha!
No harm, I trust, is done?

Pis. There might have been,
But that my master rather play'd than fought,
And had no help of anger: they were parted
By gentlemen at hand.

Queen. I am very glad on 't.
Imo. Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part,
To draw upon an exile!—O brave sir!
I would they were in Afric both together;
Myself by with a needle, that I might prick
The goer back.—Why came you from your master?

Pis. On his command: He would not suffer me
To bring him to the haven: left these notes
Of what commands I should be subject to,
When 't pleas'd you to employ me.

Queen. This hath been
Your faithful servant : I dare lay mine honour,
He will remain so.

Pis. I humbly thank your highness.

Queen. Pray, walk a while.

Imo. About some half hour hence,
I pray you, speak with me : you shall, at least,
Go see my lord aboard : for this time, leave me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A public Place.*

Enter CLOTEN and Two Lords.

1 Lord. Sir, I would advise you to shift a shirt ; the
violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice :
Where air comes out, air comes in : there 's none abroad
so wholesome as that you vent.

Clo. If my shirt were bloody, then to shift it. Have
I hurt him ?

2 Lord. No, faith ; not so much as his patience.

[*Aside.*]

1 Lord. Hurt him ? his body 's a passable carcass
if he be not hurt : it is a thoroughfare for steel if it be
not hurt.

2 Lord. His steel was in debt : it went o' the back
side the town.

[*Aside.*]

Clo. The villain would not stand me.

2 Lord. No ; but he fled forward still, toward your
face.

[*Aside.*]

1 Lord. Stand you ! You have land enough of your
own : but he added to your having ; gave you some
ground.

2 Lord. As many inches as you have oceans :
Puppies !

[*Aside.*]

Clo. I would they had not come between us.

2 Lord. So would I, till you had measured how long
a fool you were upon the ground.

[*Aside.*]

Clo. And that she should love this fellow, and refuse me!

2 *Lord.* If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damned. [*Aside.*

1 *Lord.* Sir, as I told you always, her beauty and her brain go not together: She's a good sign, but I have seen small reflection of her wit.

2 *Lord.* She shines not upon fools, lest the reflection should hurt her. [*Aside.*

Clo. Come, I'll to my chamber: 'Would there had been some hurt done!

2 *Lord.* I wish not so; unless it had been the fall of an ass, which is no great hurt. [*Aside.*

Clo. You'll go with us?

1 *Lord.* I'll attend your lordship.

Clo. Nay, come, let's go together.

2 *Lord.* Well, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in Cymbeline's Palace.*

Enter IMOGEN and PISANIO.

Imo. I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' the haven,
And question'dst every sail: if he should write,
And I not have it, 't were a paper lost,
As offer'd mercy is. What was the last
That he spake to thee?

Pis. It was, "His queen, his queen!"

Imo. Then wav'd his handkerchief?

Pis. And kiss'd it, madam.

Imo. Senseless linen! happier therein than I!
And that was all?

Pis. No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with his eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove or hat or handkerchief
Still waving, as the fits and stirs of his mind

Could best express how slow his soul sail'd on,
How swift his ship.

Imo. Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.

Pis. Madam, so I did.

Imo. I would have broke mine eye-strings; crack'd
them, but

To look upon him; till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle:
Nay, follow'd him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air; and then
Have turn'd mine eye, and wept.—But, good Pisanio,
When shall we hear from him?

Pis. Be assur'd, madam,
With his next vantage.^a

Imo. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say: ere I could tell him
How I would think on him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts, and such; or I could make him swear
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest and his honour; or have charg'd him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
To encounter me with orisons, for then
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set
Betwixt two charming words, comes in my father,
And, like the tyrannous breathing of the north,
Shakes all our buds from growing.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. The queen, madam,
Desires your highness' company.

Imo. Those things I bid you do, get them despatch'd.—
I will attend the queen.

Pis. Madam, I shall. [Exeunt.

^a *Vantage*—opportunity.

SCENE V.—Rome. *An Apartment in Philario's House.*

Enter PHILARIO, IACHIMO, and a Frenchman.

Iach. Believe it, sir: I have seen him in Britain: he was then of a crescent note; expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name of: but I could then have looked on him without the help of admiration; though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side, and I to peruse him by *items*.

Phi. You speak of him when he was less furnished, than now he is, with that which makes him both without and within.

French. I have seen him in France: we had very many there could behold the sun with as firm eyes as he.

Iach. This matter of marrying his king's daughter, (wherein he must be weighed rather by her value than his own,) words him, I doubt not, a great deal from the matter.

French. And then his banishment—

Iach. Ay, and the approbation of those that weep this lamentable divorce, under her colours, are wonderfully to extend him; be it but to fortify her judgment, which else an easy battery might lay flat, for taking a beggar without less quality. But how comes it he is to sojourn with you? How creeps acquaintance?

Phi. His father and I were soldiers together; to whom I have been often bound for no less than my life:—

Enter POSTHUMUS.

Here comes the Briton: Let him be so entertained amongst you, as suits, with gentlemen of your knowing, to a stranger of his quality.—I beseech you all, be better known to this gentleman, whom I commend to you as a noble friend of mine: How worthy he is I will leave

to appear hereafter, rather than story him in his own hearing.

French. Sir, we have known together in Orleans.

Post. Since when I have been debtor to you for courtesies, which I will be ever to pay, and yet pay still.

French. Sir, you o'er-rate my poor kindness: I was glad I did atone^a my countryman and you; it had been pity you should have been put together with so mortal a purpose as then each bore, upon importance^b of so slight and trivial a nature.

Post. By your pardon, sir, I was then a young traveller: rather shunned to go even with what I heard, than in my every action to be guided by others' experiences: but, upon my mended judgment, (if I offend not to say it is mended,) my quarrel was not altogether slight.

French. 'Faith, yes, to be put to the arbitrement of swords; and by such two that would, by all likelihood, have confounded one the other, or have fallen both.

Iach. Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?

French. Safely, I think: 't was a contention in public, which may, without contradiction, suffer the report. It was much like an argument that fell out last night, where each of us fell in praise of our country mistresses: This gentleman at that time vouching (and upon warrant of bloody affirmation) his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant-qualified, and less attemptible, than any the rarest of our ladies in France.

Iach. That lady is not now living; or this gentleman's opinion, by this, worn out.

Post. She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

Iach. You must not so far prefer her 'fore ours of Italy.

Post. Being so far provoked as I was in France, I

^a *Atone*—to make at one.

^b *Importance*—import, matter.

would abate her nothing; though I profess myself her adorer, not her friend.

Iach. As fair, and as good, (a kind of hand-in-hand comparison,) had been something too fair, and too good, for any lady in Britany. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could not but believe she excelled many: but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.

Post. I praised her as I rated her: so do I my stone.

Iach. What do you esteem it at?

Post. More than the world enjoys.

Iach. Either your unparagoned mistress is dead, or she is outprized by a trifle.

Post. You are mistaken: the one may be sold, or given, if there were wealth enough for the purchase, or merit for the gift: the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

Iach. Which the gods have given you?

Post. Which, by their graces, I will keep.

Iach. You may wear her in title yours: but you know strange fowl light upon neighbouring ponds. Your ring may be stolen too: so, your brace of unprizeable estimations, the one is but frail, and the other casual; a cunning thief, or a that-way-accomplished courtier, would hazard the winning both of first and last.

Post. Your Italy contains none so accomplished a courtier to convince^a the honour of my mistress; if, in the holding or the loss of that, you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding I fear not my ring.

Phi. Let us leave here, gentlemen.

Post. Sir, with all my heart. This worthy signior, I thank him, makes no stranger of me; we are familiar at first.

Iach. With five times so much conversation I should

^a *Convincing*—overcome.

get ground of your fair mistress : make her go back, even to the yielding ; had I admittance and opportunity to friend.

Post. No, no.

Iach. I dare, thereupon, pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring ; which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something : But I make my wager rather against your confidence than her reputation : and, to bar your offence herein too, I durst attempt it against any lady in the world.

Post. You are a great deal abused in too bold a persuasion ; and I doubt not you sustain what you're worthy of by your attempt.

Iach. What's that ?

Post. A repulse : Though your attempt, as you call it, deserve more,—a punishment too.

Phi. Gentlemen, enough of this : it came in too suddenly ; let it die as it was born, and, I pray you, be better acquainted.

Iach. 'Would I had put my estate, and my neighbour's, on the approbation of what I have spoke.

Post. What lady would you choose to assail ?

Iach. Yours ; whom in constancy you think stands so safe. I will lay you ten thousand ducats to your ring, that, commend me to the court where your lady is, with no more advantage than the opportunity of a second conference, and I will bring from thence that honour of hers which you imagine so reserved.

Post. I will wage against your gold, gold to it : my ring I hold dear as my finger ; 'tis part of it.

Iach. You are a friend, and therein the wiser. If you buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting : But, I see you have some religion in you, that you fear.

Post. This is but a custom in your tongue ; you bear a graver purpose, I hope.

Iach. I am the master of my speeches ; and would undergo what's spoken, I swear.

Post. Will you?—I shall but lend my diamond till your return :—Let there be covenants drawn between us : My mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking : I dare you to this match : here's my ring.

Phi. I will have it no lay.

Iach. By the gods it is one :—If I bring you no sufficient testimony that I have enjoyed the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are yours ; so is your diamond too. If I come off, and leave her in such honour as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours :—provided I have your commendation for my more free entertainment.

Post. I embrace these conditions ; let us have articles betwixt us :—only, thus far you shall answer. If you make your voyage upon her, and give me directly to understand you have prevailed, I am no further your enemy : she is not worth our debate. If she remain unseduced, (you not making it appear otherwise,) for your ill opinion, and the assault you have made to her chastity, you shall answer me with your sword.

Iach. Your hand ; a covenant : We will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and straight away for Britain ; lest the bargain should catch cold, and starve. I will fetch my gold, and have our two wagers recorded.

Post. Agreed.

[*Exeunt POST. and IACH.*

French. Will this hold, think you?

Phi. Signior Iachimo will not from it. Pray, let us follow 'em.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—Britain. *A Room in Cymbeline's Palace.*

Enter QUEEN, Ladies, and CORNELIUS.

Queen. Whiles yet the dew's on ground, gather those flowers ;

Make haste : Who has the note of them ?

1 *Lady*.

I, madam.

Queen. Despatch.

[*Exeunt Ladies*.]

Now, master doctor, have you brought those drugs ?

Cor. Pleaseth your highness, ay : here they are,
madam :

[*Presenting a small box*.]

But I beseech your grace, (without offence—

My conscience bids me ask,) wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death ;
But, though slow, deadly ?

Queen.

I wonder, doctor,

Thou ask'st me such a question : Have I not been
Thy pupil long ? Hast thou not learn'd me how
To make perfumes ? distil ? preserve ? yea, so,
That our great king himself doth woo me oft
For my confections ? Having thus far proceeded,
(Unless thou think'st me devilish,) is 't not meet
That I did amplify my judgment in
Other conclusions ?^a I will try the forces
Of these thy compounds on such creatures as
We count not worth the hanging, (but none human,)
To try the vigour of them, and apply
Allayments to their act ; and by them gather
Their several virtues, and effects.

Cor.

Your highness

Shall from this practice but make hard your heart :
Besides, the seeing these effects will be
Both noisome and infectious.

Queen.

O, content thee.

Enter PISANIO.

Here comes a flattering rascal ; upon him [*Aside*.
Will I first work : he 's for his master,
And enemy to my son.—How now, Pisanio ?

^a *Conclusions*—experiments.

Doctor, your service for this time is ended ;
Take your own way.

Cor. I do suspect you, madam ;
But you shall do no harm. [*Aside.*

Queen. Hark thee, a word.— [*To PIS.*

Cor. [*Aside.*] I do not like her. She doth think she
has

Strange lingering poisons : I do know her spirit,
And will not trust one of her malice with
A drug of such damn'd nature : Those she has
Will stupify and dull the sense awhile :
Which first, perchance, she'll prove on cats and dogs ;
Then afterward up higher ; but there is
No danger in what show of death it makes,
More than the locking up the spirits a time,
To be more fresh, reviving. She is fool'd
With a most false effect ; and I the truer
So to be false with her.

Queen. No further service, doctor,
Until I send for thee.

Cor. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*

Queen. Weeps she still, say'st thou ? Dost thou think
in time

She will not quench ; and let instructions enter
Where folly now possesses ? Do thou work :
When thou shalt bring me word she loves my son,
I'll tell thee, on the instant, thou art then
As great as is thy master : greater ; for
His fortunes all he speechless, and his name
Is at last gasp : Return he cannot, nor
Continue where he is : to shift his being
Is to exchange one misery with another ;
And every day that comes, comes to decay
A day's work in him : What shalt thou expect,
To be depend on a thing that leans,—
Who cannot be new built, nor has no friends,
[*The QUEEN drops a box : PIS. takes it up.*

So much as but to prop him?—Thou tak'st up
 Thou know'st not what ; but take it for thy labour :
 It is a thing I made, which hath the king
 Five times redeem'd from death : I do not know
 What is more cordial :—Nay, I prithee, take it ;
 It is an earnest of a further good
 That I mean to thee. Tell thy mistress how
 The case stands with her ; do 't, as from thyself.
 Think what a chance thou changest on ; but think
 Thou hast thy mistress still,—to boot, my son,
 Who shall take notice of thee : I'll move the king
 To any shape of thy preferment, such
 As thou 'lt desire ; and then myself, I chiefly,
 That set thee on to this desert, am bound
 To load thy merit richly. Call my women :
 Think on my words. [*Exit Pis.*—A sly and constant

knave ;
 Not to be shak'd : the agent for his master ;
 And the remembrancer of her, to hold
 The hand fast to her lord.—I have given him that,
 Which, if he take, shall quite unpeople her
 Of liegers for her sweet ; and which she, after,
 Except she bend her humour, shall be assur'd

Re-enter PISANIO and Ladies.

To taste of too.—So, so ;—well done, well done
 The violets, cowslips, and the primroses,
 Bear to my closet :—Fare thee well, Pisanio ;
 Think on my words. [*Exeunt QUEEN and Ladies.*

Pis. And shall do :
 But when to my good lord I prove untrue,
 I'll choke myself : there 's all I'll do for you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter IMOGEN.

Imo. A father cruel, and a step-dame false ;

A foolish suitor to a wedded lady,
 That hath her husband banish'd ;—O, that husband !
 My supreme crown of grief ! and those repeated
 Vexations of it ! Had I been thief-stolen,
 As my two brothers, happy ! but most miserable
 Is the desire that 's glorious : Blessed be those,
 How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,
 Which seasons^a comfort.—Who may this be ? Fye !

Enter PISANIO and IACHIMO.

Pis. Madam, a noble gentleman of Rome,
 Comes from my lord with letters.

Iach. Change you, madam ?
 The worthy Leonatus is in safety,
 And greets your highness dearly. [*Presents a letter.*

Imo. Thanks, good sir :
 You are kindly welcome.

Iach. All of her that is out of door, most rich ! [*Aside.*
 If she be turkish'd with a mind so rare,
 She is alone the Arabian bird ; and I
 Have lost the wager. Boldness be my friend !
 Arm me, audacity, from head to foot !
 O, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight ;
 Rather, directly fly.

Imo. [*Reads.*] " He is one of the noblest note, to whose kindnesses I am most infinitely tied. Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your trust^b—— "
 " LEONATUS."

So far I read aloud :
 But even the very middle of my heart

^a *Seasons* is a verb. The *mean* have their *honest*, homely wills (opposed to the desire that 's *glorious*)—and that circumstance gives a relish to comfort.

^b *Trust.* Imogen breaks off in reading the letter of Leonatus. That which is addressed to her in the tenderness of affection is not "read aloud." Unmindful of this, the passage has been altered into "Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your *trust* Leonatus." The signature is separated from the word which has been changed to *truest*, by the passage which Imogen glances at in thankful silence.

Is warm'd by the rest, and takes it thankfully.
 You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I
 Have words to bid you; and shall find it so
 In all that I can do.

Iach. Thanks, fairest lady.—
 What! are men mad? Hath nature given them eyes
 To see this vaulted arch, and the rich crop
 Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt
 The fiery orbs above, and the twin'd stones
 Upon the number'd beach?^a and can we not
 Partition make with spectacles so precious
 'Twixt fair and foul?

Imo. What makes your admiration?

Iach. It cannot be i' the eye; for apes and monkeys,
 'Twixt two such shes, would chatter this way and
 Contemn with mows the other: Nor i' the judgment;
 For idiots, in this case of favour, would
 Be wisely definite: Nor i' the appetite;
 Sluttish, to such neat excellence oppos'd,
 Should make desire vomit emptiness,
 Not so allur'd to feed.

Imo. What is the matter, trow?

Iach. The cloyed will,
 (That satiate yet unsatisfied desire,
 That tub both fill'd and running,) ravening first
 The lamb, longs after for the garbage.

Imo. What, dear sir,
 Thus raps^b you? Are you well?

Iach. Thanks, madam; well:—'Beseech you, sir,
 desire [To PISANIO.
 My man's abode where I did leave him: he
 Is strange and preevish.

Pis. I was going, sir,
 To give him welcome. [Exit PISANIO.

^a The stones of the beach are each so like the other that the epithet *twin'd* is appropriate.

^b *Raps* you—transports you.

Imo Continues well my lord? His health, 'beseech you?

Iach. Well, madam.

Imo. Is he dispos'd to mirth? I hope he is.

Iach. Exceeding pleasant; none a stranger there
So merry and so gamesome: he is call'd
The Briton reveller.

Imo When he was here
He did incline to sadness; and oft-times
Not knowing why.

Iach I never saw him sad.
There is a Frenchman his companion, one
An eminent monsieur, that, it seems, much loves
A Gallian girl at home: he furnaces
The thick sighs from him; whiles the jolly Briton
(Your lord, I mean) laughs from 's free lungs, cries, "O!
Can my sides hold, to think that man,—who knows,
By history, report, or his own proof,
What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose
But must be,—will his free hours languish for
Assured bondage?"

Imo. Will my lord say so?

Iach. Ay, madam; with his eyes in flood with
laughter.

It is a recreation to be by,
And hear him mock the Frenchman: But, heavens know,
Some men are much to blame.

Imo. Not he, I hope.

Iach. Not he: But yet heaven's bounty towards him
might
Be us'd more thankfully. In himself, 't is much;
In you,—which I account his, beyond all talents,—
Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound
To pity too.

Imo. What do you pity, sir?

Iach. Two creatures, heartily.

Imo. Am I one, sir?

You look on me. What wreck discern you in me
Deserves your pity?

Iach. Lamentable! What!
To hide me from the radiant sun, and solace
I' the dungeon by a snuff?

Imo. I pray you, sir,
Deliver with more openness your answers
To my demands. Why do you pity me?

Iach. That others do,
I was about to say, enjoy your——But
It is an office of the gods to venge it,
Not mine to speak on 't.

Imo. You do seem to know
Something of me, or what concerns me. 'Pray you,
(Since doubting things go ill often hurts more
Than to be sure they do: For certainties
Either are past remedies; or, timely knowing,
The remedy then born,) discover to me
What both you spun and stop.

Iach. Had I this cheek,
To bathe my lips upon; this hand, whose touch,
Whose every touch, would force the feeler's soul
To the oath of loyalty; this object, which
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Fixing it only here: should I (damn'd then)
Slaver with lips as common as the stairs
That mount the Capitol: join gripes with hands
Made hard with hourly falsehood (falsehood, as
With labour); then, by-peeping^a in an eye,
Base and unlustrous as the smoky light
That 's fed with stinking tallow; it were fit,
That all the plagues of hell should at one time
Encounter such revolt.

Imo. My lord, I fear,
Has forgot Britain.

Iach. And himself. Not I,

^a *By-peeping*—clandestinely peeping.

Inclin'd to this intelligence, pronounce
The beggary of his change; but 't is your graces
That, from my mutest conscience, to my tongue,
Charms this report out.

Imo. Let me hear no more.

Iach. O dearest soul! your cause doth strike my heart
With pity, that doth make me sick. A lady
So fair, and fasten'd to an empery,
Would make the great'st king double! To be partner'd
With tomboys, hir'd with that self-exhibition
Which your own coffers yield! with diseas'd ventures,
That play with all infirmities for gold
Which rottenness can lend nature! such boil'd stuff,
As well might poison poison! Be reveng'd:
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you
Recoil from your great stock.

Imo. Reveng'd!

How should I be reveng'd? If this be true,
(As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse,) if it be true,
How shall I be reveng'd?

Iach. Should he make me
Live like Diana's priest, betwixt cold sheets,
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps,
In your despite, upon your purse? Revenge it.
I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure;
More noble than that runagate to your bed;
And will continue fast to your affection,
Still close, as sure.

Imo. What ho, Pisanio!

Iach. Let me my service tender on your lips.

Imo. Away!—I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee.—If thou wert honourable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue not
For such an end thou seek'st; as base, as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman, who is as far
From thy report, as thou from honour; and

Solicit'st here a lady, that disdains
Thee and the devil alike.—What, ho! Pisanio!—
The king my father shall be made acquainted
Of thy assault; if he shall think it fit,
A saucy stranger, in his court, to mart
As in a Romish stew, and to expound
His beastly mind to us; he hath a court
He little cares for, and a daughter whom
He not respects at all.—What ho, Pisanio!

Iach. O happy Leonatus! I may say:
The credit that thy lady hath of thee
Deserves thy trust; and thy most perfect goodness
Her assur'd credit!—Blessed live you long!
A lady to the worthiest sir, that ever
Country call'd his! and you his mistress, only
For the most worthiest fit! Give me your pardon.
I have spoke this, to know if your affiance
Were deeply rooted; and shall make your lord
That which he is, new o'er: And he is one
The truest manner'd; such a holy witch,
That he enchants societies unto him:
Half all men's hearts are his.

Imo. You make amends

Iach. He sits 'mongst men, like a descended' god:
He hath a kind of honour sets him off,
More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
Most mighty princess, that I have adventur'd
To try your taking, a false report which hath
Honour'd with confirmation your great judgment
In the election of a sir so rare,
Which you know, cannot err: The love I bear him
Made me to fan you thus; but the gods made you,
Unlike all others, chafless. Pray, your pardon.

Imo. All's well, sir: Take my power i' the court for
yours.

Iach. My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
To entreat your grace but in a small request,

And yet of moment too, for it concerns
Your lord; myself, and other noble friends,
Are partners in the business.

Imo. Pray, what is 't?

Iach. Some dozen Romans of us, and your lord,
(The best feather of our wing,) have mingled sums,
To buy a present for the emperor;
Which I, the factor for the rest, have done
In France: 'T is plate, of rare device; and jewels,
Of rich and exquisite form; their values great;
And I am something curious, being strange,
To have them in safe stowage. May it please you
To take them in protection?

Imo. Willingly;
And pawn mine honour for their safety: since
My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
In my bed-chamber.

Iach. They are in a trunk,
Attended by my men: I will make bold
To send them to you, only for this night.
I must aboard to-morrow.

Imo. O, no, no.

Iach. Yes, I beseech; or I shall short my word,
By length'ning my return. From Gallia
I cross'd the seas on purpose, and on promise
To see your grace.

Imo. I thank you for your pains;
But not away to-morrow!

Iach. O, I must, madam:
Therefore, I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do 't to-night:
I have outstood my time; which is material
To the tender of our present.

Imo. I will write.
Send your trunk to me; it shall safe be kept,
And truly yielded you: You are very welcome.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Court before Cymbeline's Palace.**Enter CLOTEN and Two Lords.*

Clo. Was there ever man had such luck! when I kissed the jack, upon an up-cast to be hit away! I had a hundred pound on 't: And then a whoreson jack-anapes must take me up for swearing; as if I borrowed mine oaths of him, and might not spend them at my pleasure.

1 Lord. What got he by that? You have broke his pate with your bowl.

2 Lord. If his wit had been like him that broke it, it would have ran all out. [*Aside.*]

Clo. When a gentleman is disposed to swear, it is not for any standers-by to curtail his oaths: Ha?

2 Lord. No, my lord; nor [*Aside.*] crop the ears of them.

Clo. Whoreson dog!—I give him satisfaction? 'Would he had been one of my rank!

2 Lord. To have smelt like a fool. [*Aside.*]

Clo. I am not vexed more at any thing in the earth,—A pox on't! I had rather not be so noble as I am. They dare not fight with me, because of the queen my mother: every jack-slave bath his belly full of fighting, and I must go up and down like a cock that nobody can match.

2 Lord. You are cock and capon too; and you crow, cock, with your comb on. [*Aside.*]

Clo. Sayest thou?

1 Lord. It is not fit your lordship should undertake every companion* that you give offence to.

* *Companion* is used here, and in other passages of Shakspeare, in the same sense as *fellow* is at present.

Clo. No, I know that: but it is fit I should commit offence to my inferiors.

2 Lord. Ay, it is fit for your lordship only.

Clo. Why, so I say.

1 Lord. Did you hear of a stranger that 's come to court to-night?

Clo. A stranger! and I not know on 't!

2 Lord. He 's a strange fellow himself, and knows it not. [*Aside.*

1 Lord. There 's an Italian come; and, 't is thought, one of Leonatus' friends.

Clo. Leonatus! a banished rascal; and he 's another, whatsoever he be. Who told you of this stranger?

1 Lord. One of your lordship's pages.

Clo. Is it fit I went to look upon him? Is there no derogation in 't?

1 Lord. You cannot derogate, my lord.

Clo. Not easily, I think.

2 Lord. You are a fool granted; therefore your issues, being foolish, do not derogate. [*Aside.*

Clo. Come, I'll go see this Italian: What I have lost to-day at bowls I'll win to-night of him. Come, go.

2 Lord. I'll attend your lordship.

[*Exeunt CLOTEN and first Lord.*

That such a crafty devil as is his mother
Should yield the world this ass! a woman, that
Bears all down with her brain; and this her son
Cannot take two from twenty for his heart,
And leave eighteen. Alas, poor princess,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endur'st!
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd;
A mother hourly coining plots; a wooer,
More hateful than the foul expulsion is
Of thy dear husband. From that horrid act
Of the divorce he'd make, the heavens hold firm
The walls of thy dear honour; keep unshak'd
That temple, thy fair mind; that thou may'st stand,
To enjoy thy banish'd lord, and this great land! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Bed-Chamber ; in one part of it a Trunk.*

IMOGEN *reading in her bed ; a Lady attending.*

Imo. Who 's there ? my woman Helen ?

Lady. Please you, madam.

Imo. What hour is it ?

Lady. Almost midnight, madam.

Imo. I have read three hours then : mine eyes are weak :

Fold down the leaf where I have left : To bed :

Take not away the taper, leave it burning ;

And if thou canst awake by four o' the clock,

I prithee, call me. Sleep hath seiz'd me wholly.

[*Exit Lady.*]

To your protection I commend me, gods !

From fairies, and the tempters of the night,

Guard me, beseech ye ! [*Sleeps. IACH., from the trunk.*]

Iach. The crickets sing, and man's o'er-labour'd sense

Repairs itself by rest : Our Tarquin thus

Did softly press the rushes, ere he waken'd

The chastity he wounded.—Cytherea,

How bravely thou becom'st thy bed ! fresh lily !

And whiter than the sheets ! That I might touch

But kiss ; one kiss !—Rubies unparagon'd,

How dearly they do 't.—'Tis her breathing that

Perfumes the chamber thus : The flame o' the taper

Bows toward her ; and would under-peep her lids,

To see the enclosed lights, now canopied

Under these windows, white and azure, lac'd

With blue of heaven's own tinct—But my design.

To note the chamber, I will write all down :

Such and such pictures :—There the window : Such

The adornment of her bed :—The arras, figures,*

* M. Mason would read "the arras-figures;" but Iachimo subsequently describes, not only the figures of the arras, but its particular quality—

"Tapestry of silk and silver, the story
Proud Cleonatra," &c.

Why, such, and such :—And the contents o' the story.
Ah, but some natural notes about her body
Above ten thousand meaner moveables
Would testify, to enrich mine inventory.
O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her !
And be her sense but as a monument,
Thus in a chapel lying !—Come off, come off ;
[*Taking off her bracelet.*
As slippery, as the Gordian knot was hard !
'T is mine ; and this will witness outwardly,
As strongly as the conscience does within,
To the madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a cowslip. Here 's a voucher,
Stronger than ever law could make : this secret
Will force him think I have pick'd the lock, and ta'en
The treasure of her honour. No more.—To what end ?
Why should I write this down, that 's riveted,
Screw'd to my memory ? She hath been reading late
The tale of Tereus ; here the leaf 's turn'd down
Where Philomel gave up ;—I have enough :
To the trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning
May bare the raven's eye !^a I lodge in fear ;
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here.

[*Clock strikes.*

One, two, three,—Time, time !

[*Goes into the trunk. The scene closes.*

SCENE III.—*Without the Palace, under Imogen's Apartment.*

Enter CLOTEN and Lords.

1 *Lord.* Your lordship is the most patient man in loss,
the most coldest that ever turned up ace.

^a To bare the raven's eye, is to open the raven's eye—the eye of one of the earliest-waking and the quickest-seeing of birds.

Clo. It would make any man cold to lose.

1 Lord. But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship. You are most hot and furious when you win.

Clo. Winning will put any man into courage. If I could get this foolish Imogen, I should have gold enough. It's almost morning, is't not?

1 Lord. Day, my lord.

Clo. I would this music would come: I am advised to give her music o' mornings; they say it will penetrate.

Enter Musicians.

Come on; tune. If you can penetrate her with your fingering, so; we'll try with tongue too: if none will do, let her remain; but I'll never give o'er. First, a very excellent good-conceited thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it,—and then let her consider.

SONG.

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
 And Phœbus' gins arise,
 His steeds to water at those springs
 On chalic'd flowers that lies;
 And winking Mary-buds begin to ope their golden eyes
 With everything that pretty is^a—My lady sweet, arise
 Arise, arise.

So, get you gone. If this penetrate, I will consider your music the better: if it do not, it is a voice in her ears, which horse-hairs and calves'-guts, nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot, can never amend.

[Exeunt Musicians.]

^a Hanmer changed this to *but*—a pretty word. But *is* occurs in the folio. We print the lines as they are printed in that edition; by which, in all probability, a different *time* of the air was indicated—a more rapid movement.

Enter CYMBELINE and QUEEN.

2 *Lord.* Here comes the king.

Clo. I am glad I was up so late; for that 's the reason I was up so early. He cannot choose but take this service I have done, fatherly. Good morrow to your majesty, and to my gracious mother.

Cym. Attend you here the door of our stern daughter? Will she not forth?

Clo. I have assailed her with musics, but she vouchsafes no notice.

Cym. The exile of her minion is too new; She hath not yet forgot him: some more time Must wear the print of his remembrance out, And then she 's yours.

Queen. You are most bound to the king, Who lets go by no vantages that may Prefer you to his daughter. Frame yourself To orderly solicits; and, befriended With aptness of the season, make denials Increase your services: so seem, as if You were inspir'd to do those duties which You tender to her, that you in all obey her, Save when command to your dismissal tends, And therein you are senseless.

Clo.

Senseless? not so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. So like you, sir, ambassadors from Rome; The one is Caius Lucius.

Cym.

A worthy fellow, Albeit he comes on angry purpose now; But that 's no fault of his: We must receive him According to the honour of his sender; And towards himself, his goodness forespent on us, We must extend our notice. Our dear son, When you have given good morning to your mistress, Attend the queen and us; we shall have need

To employ you towards this Roman.—Come, our queen.

[*Exeunt CYM., QUEEN, Lords, and Mess.*]

Clo. If she be up, I'll speak with her; if not,
Let her lie still and dream.—By your leave, ho!—

[*Knocks.*]

I know her women are about her. What
If I do line one of their hands? 'T is gold
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, and makes
Diana's rangers false^a themselves, yield up
Their deer to the stand o' the stealer; and 't is gold
Which makes the true man kill'd, and saves the thief;
Nay, sometime, hangs both thief and true man: What
Can it not do, and undo? I will make
One of her women lawyer to me; for
I yet not understand the case myself.
By your leave.

[*Knocks.*]

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Who's there that knocks?

Clo.

A gentleman.

Lady.

No more?

Clo. Yes, and a gentlewoman's son.

Lady.

That's more

Than some, whose tailors are as dear as yours,
Can justly boast of: What's your lordship's pleasure?

Clo. Your lady's person: Is she ready?

Lady.

Ay,

To keep her chamber.

Clo. There is gold for you; sell me your good report.

Lady. How! my good name? or to report of you
What I shall think is good?—The princess—

Enter IMOGEN.

Clo. Good-morrow, fairest: sister, your sweet hand.

Imo. Good-morrow, sir: You lay out too much pains
For purchasing but trouble: the thanks I give

^a *Faise* is here used as a verb. See Note in 'The Comedy of Errors,' Act II. Sc. 2.

Is telling you that I am poor of thanks,
And scarce can spare them.

Clo. Still, I swear I love you.

Imo. If you but said so 't were as deep with me :
If you swear still, your recompence is still
That I regard it not.

Clo. This is no answer.

Imo. But that you shall not say I yield, being silent,
I would not speak. I pray you, spare me : i' faith,
I shall unfold equal discourtesy
To your best kindness ; one of your great knowing
Should learn, being taught, forbearance.

Clo. To leave you in your madness, 't were my sin :
I will not.

Imo. Fools are not mad folks.

Clo. Do you call me fool ?

Imo. As I am mad, I do :

If you 'll be patient, I 'll no more be mad ;
That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners,
By being so verbal :^a and learn now, for all,
That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
By the very truth of it, I care not for you ;
And am so near the lack of clarity,
(To accuse myself,) I hate you ; which I had rather
You felt, than make 't my boast.

Clo. You sin against
Obedience, which you owe your father. For
The contract you pretend with that base wretch,
(One bred of alms, and foster'd with cold dishes,
With scraps o' the court,) it is no contract, none :
And though it be allow'd in meaner parties,
(Yet who than he more mean ?) to knit their souls
(On whom there is no more dependency

^a So *verbal*. Imogen has been parrying her strange admirer ;
but she now resolves to *speak* plainly—to be *verbal*—and thus to
forget a lady's manners.

But brats and beggary) in self-figur'd knot,
 Yet you are curb'd from that enlargement by
 The consequence o' the crown ; and must not soil
 The precious note of it with a base slave,
 A hilding for a livery, a squire's cloth,
 A pantler, not so eminent.

Imo. Profane fellow !

Wert thou the son of Jupiter, and no more
 But what thou art besides, thou wert too base
 To be his groom : thou wert dignified enough,
 Even to the point of envy, if 't were made
 Comparative for your virtues, to be styl'd
 The under-hangman of his kingdom ; and hated
 For being preferr'd so well.

Clo. The south-fog rot him !

Imo. He never can meet more mischance than come
 To be but nam'd of thee. His meanest garment,
 That ever hath but clipp'd his body, is dearer,
 In my respect, than all the hairs above thee,
 Were they all made such men.—How now, Pisanio ?

Enter PISANIO.

Clo. His garment ? Now, the devil—

Imo. To Dorothy my woman hie thee presently :—

Clo. His garment ?

Imo. I am sprighted with a fool ;
 Frighted, and anger'd worse :—Go, bid my woman
 Search for a jewel, that too casually
 Hath left mine arm ; it was thy master's : 'shrew me,
 If I would lose it for a revenue
 Of any king's in Europe. I do think
 I saw 't this morning : confident I am
 Last night 't was on mine arm ; I kiss'd it :
 I hope it be not gone, to tell my lord
 That I kiss aught but he.

Pis. 'T will not be lost.

Imo. I hope so : go and search. [Exit Pis.]

Clo. You have abus'd me :—
His meanest garment ?

Imo. Ay ; I said so, sir.
If you will make 't an action call witness to 't.

Clo. I will inform your father.

Imo. Your mother too :
She 's my good lady ;^a and will conceive, I hope,
But the worst of me. So I leave you, sir,
To the worst of discontent. [Exit.

Clo. I 'll be reveng'd :—
His meanest garment ?—Well. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—Rome. *An Apartment in Philario's House.*

Enter POSTHUMUS and PHILARIO.

Post. Fear it not, sir ; I would I were so sure
To win the king, as I am bold her honour
Will remain hers.

Phi. What means do you make to him ?

Post. Not any ; but abide the change of time ;
Quake in the present winter's state, and wish
That warmer days would come : In these sear'd hopes,
I barely gratify your love ; they failing,
I must die much your debtor.

Phi. Your very goodness, and your company,
O'erpays all I can do. By this, your king
Hath heard of great Augustus : Caius Lucius
Will do his commission throughly : And, I think,
He 'll grant the tribute, send the arrearages,
Or look upon our Romans, whose remembrance
Is yet fresh in their grief.

Post. I do believe,
(Statist though I am none, nor like to be,)

^a *She 's my good lady.* This phrase is used ironically. To
"stand my good lord," is—to be my good friend.

That this will prove a war; and you shall hear
The legions, now in Gallia, sooner landed
In our not-fearing Britain, than have tidings
Of any penny tribute paid. Our countrymen
Are men more order'd, than when Julius Cæsar
Smil'd at their lack of skill, but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at: Their discipline
(Now mingled with their courages) will make known
To their approvers, they are people such
That mend upon the world.

Enter IACHIMO.

Phi. See! Iachimo!

Post. The swiftest harts have posted you by land:
And winds of all the corners kiss'd your sails,
To make your vessel nimble.

Phi. Welcome, sir.

Post. I hope the briefness of your answer made
The speediness of your return.

Iach. Your lady
Is one of the fairest that I have look'd upon.

Post. And therewithal the best: or let her beauty
Look through a casement to allure false hearts,
And be false with them.

Iach. Here are letters for you.

Post. Their tenour good, I trust.

Iach. 'T is very like.

Phi. Was Caius Lucius in the Britain court,
When you were there?

Iach. He was expected then,
But not approach'd.

Post. All is well yet.
Sparkles this stone as it was wont? or is 't not
Too dull for your good wearing?

Iach. If I have lost it,
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.
I'll make a journey twice as far, to enjoy

A second night of such sweet shortness, which
Was mine in Britain ; for the ring is won.

Post. The stone's too hard to come by.

Iach.

Not a whit,

Your lady being so easy.

Post.

Make not, sir,

Your loss your sport : I hope you know that we
Must not continue friends.

Iach.

Good sir, we must,

If you keep covenant : Had I not brought
The knowledge of your mistress home, I grant
We were to question further : but I now
Profess myself the winner of her honour,
Together with your ring ; and not the wronger
Of her, or you, having proceeded but
By both your wills.

Post.

If you can make 't apparent
That you have tasted her in bed, my hand,
And ring, is yours : If not, the foul opinion
You had of her pure honour gains, or loses,
Your sword, or mine ; or masterless leaves both
To who shall find them.

Iach.

Sir, my circumstances
Being so near the truth as I will make them,
Must first induce you to believe : whose strength
I will confirm with oath ; which, I doubt not,
You 'll give me leave to spare, when you shall find
You need it not.

Post.

Proceed.

Iach.

First, her bed-chamber,
(Where, I confess, I slept not ; but profess,
Had that was well worth watching,) it was hang'd
With tapestry of silk and silver ; the story
Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
And Cydnus swell'd above the banks, or for
The press of boats, or pride : A piece of work
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive

In workmanship, and value ; which I wonder'd,
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on 't was—

Post. This is true ;
And this you might have heard of here, by me,
Or by some other.

Iach. More particulars
Must justify my knowledge.

Post. So they must,
Or do your honour injury.

Iach. The chimney
Is south the chamber ; and the chimney-piece,
Chaste Dian, bathing : never saw I figures
So likely to report themselves : the cutter
Was as another nature, dumb ; outwent her,
Motion and breath left out.

Post. This is a thing
Which you might from relation likewise reap ;
Being, as it is, much spoke of.

Iach. The roof o' the chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted : Her andirons
(I had forgot them) were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
Depending on their brands.

Post. This is her honour !—
Let it be granted you have seen all this, (and praise
Be given to your remembrance,) the description
Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid.

Iach. Then, if you can [*Pulling out the bracelet.*
Be pale, I beg but leave to air this jewel : See !—
And now 't is up again : It must be married
To that your diamond ; I 'll keep them.

Post. Jove !
Once more let me behold it : Is it that
Which I left with her ?

Iach. Sir, (I thank her,) that :

She stripp'd it from her arm ; I see her yet ;
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enrich'd it too : She gave it me, and said
She priz'd it once.

Post. May be she pluck'd it off,
To send it me.

Iach. She writes so to you ? doth she ?

Post. O, no, no, no ; 't is true. Here, take this too ;
[*Gives the ring.*]

It is a basilisk unto mine eye,
Kills me to look on 't :—Let there be no honour
Where there is beauty ; truth, where semblance ; love,
Where there 's another man : The vows of women
Of no more bondage be to where they are made,
Than they are to their virtues ; which is nothing :—
O, above measure false !

Phi. Have patience, sir,
And take your ring again ; 't is not yet won :
It may be probable she lost it ; or,
Who knows if one of her women, being corrupted,
Hath stolen it from her ?

Post. Very true ;
And so I hope he came by 't :—Back my ring ;—
Render to me some corporal sign about her,
More evident than this ; for this was stolen.

Iach. By Jupiter, I had it from her arm.

Post. Hark you, he swears ; by Jupiter he swears.
'T is true ;—nay, keep the ring—'t is true, I am sure
She would not lose it : her attendants are
All sworn, and honourable :—They induc'd to steal
it !

And by a stranger !—No, he hath enjoy'd her :
The cognizance of her incontinency
Is this,—she hath bought the name of whore thus dearly.
There, take thy hire ; and all the fiends of hell
Divide themselves between you !

Phi.

Sir, be patient !

This is not strong enough to be believ'd
Of one persuaded well of—

Post. Never talk on 't ;
She hath been colted by him.

Iach. If you seek
For further satisfying, under her breast
(Worthy the pressing) lies a mole, right proud
Of that most delicate lodging : By my life,
I kiss'd it ; and it gave me present hunger
To feed again, though full. You do remember
This stain upon her ?

Post. Ay, and it doth confirm
Another stain, as big as hell can hold,
Were there no more but it.

Iach. Will you hear more ?

Post. Spare your arithmetic : never count the turns ;
Once, and a million !

Iach. I 'll be sworn,—

Post. No swearing.
If you will swear you have not done 't, you lie ;
And I will kill thee, if thou dost deny
Thou hast made me cuckold.

Iach. I 'll deny nothing.

Post. O, that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal !
I will go there, and do 't ; i' the court ; before
Her father :—I 'll do something— [Exit

Phi. Quite besides
The government of patience !—You have won :
Let 's follow him, and pervert^a the present wrath
He hath against himself.

Iach. With all my heart. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*The same. Another Room in the same.*

Enter POSTHUMUS.

Post. Is there no way for men to be, but women

Pervert—for avert.

Must be half-workers? We are all bastards;
And that most venerable man, which I
Did call my father, was I know not where
When I was stamp'd; some coiner with his tools
Made me a counterfeit: Yet my mother seem'd
The Dian of that time: so doth my wife
The nonpareil of this.—O vengeance, vengeance!
Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd,
And pray'd me, oft, forbearance: did it with
A pudency so rosy, the sweet view on 't
Might well have warm'd old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsunn'd snow:—O, all the devils!—
This yellow Iachimo, in an hour,—was 't not?—
Or less,—at first: Perchance he spoke not; but,
Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
Cry'd, oh! and mounted: found no opposition
But what he look'd for should oppose, and she
Should from encounter guard. Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
It is the woman's part: Be it lying, note it,
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitious, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longings, slanders, mutability,
All faults that may be nam'd, nay, that hell knows,
Why, hers, in part or all; but rather, all:
For ev'n to vice
They are not constant, but are changing still
One vice but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that. I'll write against them,
Detest them, curse them:—Yet 't is greater skill
In a true hate, to pray they have their will:
The very devils cannot plague them better. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Britain. *A Room of State in Cymbeline's Palace.*

Enter CYMBELINE, QUEEN, CLOTEN, and Lords, at one door; and at another, CAIUS LUCIUS and Attendants.

Cym. Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?

Luc. When Julius Cæsar (whose remembrance yet Lives in men's eyes; and will to ears and tongues Be theme and hearing ever) was in this Britain, And conquer'd it, Cassibelan, thine uncle, (Famous in Cæsar's praises, no whit less Than in his feats deserving it,) for him, And his succession, granted Rome a tribute, Yearly three thousand pounds; which by thee lately Is left untender'd.

Queen. And, to kill the marvel, Shall be so ever.

Clo. There be many Cæsars, Ere such another Julius. Britain is A world by itself; and we will nothing pay For wearing our own noses.

Queen. That opportunity, Which then they had to take from us, to resume We have again.—Remember, sir, my liege, The kings your ancestors; together with The natural bravery of your isle, which stands As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in With rocks unscalable, and roaring waters; With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats, But suck them up to the top-mast. A kind of conquest

Cæsar made here ; but made not here his brag
Of *came*, and *saw*, and *overcame* : with shame
(The first that ever touch'd him) he was carried
From off our coast, twice beaten ; and his shipping
(Poor ignorant baubles !) on our terrible seas,
Like egg-shells mov'd upon their surges, crack'd
As easily 'gainst our rocks : For joy whereof,
The fam'd Cassibelan, who was once at point
(O, giglot^a fortune !) to master Cæsar's sword,
Made Lud's town with rejoicing fires bright,
And Britons strut with courage.

Clo. Come, there 's no more tribute to be paid : Our
kingdom is stronger than it was at that time ; and, as I
said, there is no more such Cæsars : other of them may
have crooked noses ; but to owe such straight arms,
none.

Cym. Son, let your mother end.

Clo. We have yet many among us can gripe as hard
as Cassibelan : I do not say I am one ; but I have a
hand.—Why tribute ? why should we pay tribute ? If
Cæsar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put
the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for
light ; else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now.

Cym. You must know,
Till the injurious Romans did extort
This tribute from us, we were free : Cæsar's ambition,
(Which swell'd so much that it did almost stretch
The sides o' the world,) against all colour, here
Did put the yoke upon us ; which to shake off
Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon
Ourselves to be. We do say then to Cæsar,
Our ancestor was that Mulmutius, which
Ordain'd our laws ; (whose use the sword of Cæsar

^a *Giglot*. The term may be explained by its application to
Joan of Arc, in the First Part of 'Henry VI.'—

“ Young Talbot was not horn
To be the pillage of a *giglot* wench.”

Hath too much mangled ; whose repair and franchise
 Shall, by the power we hold, be our good deed,
 Though Rome be therefore angry ;) Mulmutius made
 our laws,

Who was the first of Britain which did put
 His brows within a golden crown, and call'd
 Himself a king.

Luc. I am sorry, Cymbeline,
 That I am to pronounce Augustus Cæsar
 (Cæsar that hath more kings his servants than
 Thyself domestic officers) thine enemy :
 Receive it from me, then :—War, and confusion,
 In Cæsar's name pronounce I 'gainst thee : look
 For fury not to be resisted :—Thus defied,
 I thank thee for myself.

Cym. Thou art welcome, Caius.
 Thy Cæsar knighted me ; my youth I spent
 Much under him ; of him I gather'd honour ;
 Which he to seek of me again, perforce,
 Beloves me keep at utterance.^a I am perfect^b
 That the Pannonians and Dalmatians, for
 Their liberties, are now in arms : a precedent
 Which not to read would show the Britons cold :
 So Cæsar shall not find them.

Luc. Let proof speak.

Clo. His majesty bids you welcome. Make pastime
 with us a day, or two, or longer : If you seek us after-
 wards in other terms, you shall find us in our salt-water
 girdle : if you beat us out of it, it is yours ; if you fall
 in the adventure, our crows shall fare the better for
 you ; and there 's an end.

Luc. So, sir.

Cym. I know your master's pleasure, and he mine :
 All the remain is, welcome. [Exeunt.

^a *Utterance.* To fight at utterance is to fight without quarter
 —to the death ; the French—*Combat à outrance.*

^b *Perfect*—assured.

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Palace.**Enter PISANIO, reading a Letter.*

Pis. How! of adultery? Wherefore write you not
What monster 's her accuser?—Leonatus!
O, master! what a strange infection
Is fallen into thy ear! What false Italian
(As poisonous tongued as handed) hath prevail'd
On thy too ready hearing?—Disloyal? No:
She 's punish'd for her truth; and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take in some virtue.—O, my master!
Thy mind to her is now as low as were
Thy fortunes.—How! that I should murder her?
Upon the love, and truth, and vows, which I
Have made to thy command?—I, her?—her blood?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable. How look I,
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to?—Do 't: The letter
That I have sent her, by her own command
Shall give thee opportunity:—O damn'd paper!
Black as the ink that 's on thee! Senseless bauble,
Art thou a feodary^a for this act, and look'st
So virgin-like without? Lo, here she comes.

Enter IMOGEN.

I am ignorant in what I am commanded.

Imo. How now, Pisanio?

Pis. Madam, here is a letter from my lord.

Imo. Who? thy lord? that is my lord? Leonatus?
O, learn'd indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his characters;
He'd lay the future open—You good gods,
Let what is here contain'd relish of love,

^a *Feodary*—feudary. The *feudal vassal* and the *companion*
were each meant by the same word—*ferre*—*feudary*—*feodary*.

Of my lord's health, of his content,—yet not,
 That we two are asunder, let that grieve him,—
 (Some griefs are med'cinable; that is one of them,
 For it doth physic love)—of his content,
 All but in that!—Good wax, thy leave :—Bless'd be
 You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers,
 And men in dangerous bonds, play not alike;
 Though forfeiters you cast in prison, yet
 You clasp young Cupid's tables.—Good news, gods!
[Reads.

“Justice, and your father's wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me, an you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford-Haven. What your own love will out of this advise you, follow. So, he wishes you all happiness, that remains loyal to his vow, and your, increasing in love,
 “LEONATUS POSITHUMUS.”

O, for a horse with wings!—Hear'st thou, Pisanio?
 He is at Milford-Haven: Read, and tell me
 How far 't is thither. If one of mean affairs
 May plod it in a week, why may not I
 Glide thither in a day?—Then, true Pisanio,
 (Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st —
 O, let me 'bate,—but not like me :—yet long'st,—
 But in a fainter kind :—O, not like me;
 For mine 's beyond beyond,^a) say, and speak thick,
 (Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing.
 To the smothering of the sense,) how far it is
 To this same blessed Milford: And, by the way,
 Tell me how Wales was made so happy, as
 To inherit such a haven: But, first of all,
 How we may steal from hence; and, for the gap
 That we shall make in time, from our hencegoing
 And our return, to excuse :—but first, how get hence:
 Why should excuse be born or e'er begot?

^a *Beyond beyond* The second beyond is used as a substantive, which gives us the meaning of *further than beyond*. The Scotch have a saying—“at the back of beyond.”

We'll talk of that hereafter. Prithee, speak,
How many score of miles may we well ride
'Twixt hour and hour?

Pis. One score 'twixt sun and sun,
Madam, 's enough for you; and too much too.

Imo. Why, one that rode to his execution, man,
Could never go so slow: I have heard of riding wagers,
Where horses have been nimbler than the sands
That run i' the clock's behalf:—But this is foolery:
Go, bid my woman feign a sickness; say
She'll home to her father: and provide me, presently,
A riding suit; no costlier than would fit
A franklin's housewife.

Pis. Madam, you're best consider.

Imo. I see before me, man: nor here, nor here,
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them,
That I cannot look through. Away, I prithee;
Do as I bid thee: There's no more to say;
Accessible is none but Milford way. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Wales. *A mountainous Country,
with a Cave.*

Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, and ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. A goodly day not to keep house, with such
Whose roof's as low as ours! Stoop, boys: This gate
Instructs you how to adore the heavens; and bows you
To a morning's holy office: The gates of monarchs
Are arch'd so high that giants may jet through
And keep their impious turbands on, without
Good morrow to the sun.—Hail, thou fair heaven,
We house i' the rock, yet use thee not so hardly
As prouder livers do.

Gui. Hail, heaven!

Arv. Hail, heaven!

Bel. Now for our mountain sport: Up to yon hill,
Your legs are young; I'll tread these flats. Consider,

When you above perceive me like a crow,
 That it is place which lessens and sets off;
 And you may then revolve what tales I have told you
 Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war:
 This service is not service, so being done,
 But being so allow'd : To apprehend thus,
 Draws us a profit from all things we see:
 And often, to our comfort, shall we find
 The sharded beetle in a safer hold
 Than is the full-wing'd eagle O, this life
 Is nobler, than attending for a check;
 Richer, than doing nothing for a bribe;
 Prouder, than rustling in unpaid-for silk:
 Such gains the cap of him that makes him fine,
 Yet keeps his book uncross'd : no life to ours.

Gui Out of your proof you speak : we, poor unfledg'd,
 Have never wing'd from view o' the nest; nor know not
 What air 's from home. Haply, this life is best,
 If quiet life be best; sweeter to you,
 That have a sharper known; well corresponding
 With your stiff age: but unto us it is
 A cell of ignorance; travelling abed;
 A prison for a debtor, that not dares
 To stride a limit.

Arr. What should we speak of,
 When we are old as you? when we shall hear
 The rain and wind beat dark December, how,
 In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse
 The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing:
 We are beastly; subtle as the fox, for prey;
 Like warlike as the wolf, for what we eat:
 Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage
 We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,
 And sing our bondage freely.

Bel. How you speak!
 Did you but know the city's usuries,
 And felt them knowingly: the art o' the court,

As hard^d to leave, as keep; whose top to climb
Is certain falling, or so slippery that
The fear's as bad as falling: the toil of the war,
A pain that only seems to seek out danger
I' the name of fame and honour: which dies i' the search;
And hath as oft a slanderous epitaph
As record of fair act; nay, many times,
Doth ill deserve by doing well; what's worse,
Must court'sy at the censure:—O, boys, this story
The world may read in me: My body's mark'd
With Roman swords; and my report was once
First with the best of note: Cymbeline lov'd me;
And when a soldier was the theme my name
Was not far off: Then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit: but, in one night,
A storm, or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather.

Gui. Uncertain favour!

Bel. My fault being nothing (as I have told you oft)
But that two villains, whose false oaths prevail'd
Before my perfect honour, swore to Cymbeline
I was confederate with the Romans : so,
Follow'd my banishment ; and, this twenty years,
This rock and these demesnes have been my world :
Where I have liv'd at honest freedom ; paid
More pious debts to heaven, than in all
The fore-end of my time.—But, up to the mountains ;
This is not hunters' language :—He that strikes
The venison first shall be the lord o' the feast ;
To him the other two shall minister ;
And we will fear no poison, which attends
In place of greater state. I'll meet you in the valleys.

| Exeunt GUI. and ARV.

How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!
These boys know little they are sons to the king;
Nor Cymbeline dreams that they are alive.

They think they are mine : and, though train'd up thus
meanly

I' the cave, wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
The roofs of palaces ; and nature prompts them,
In simple and low things, to prize it much
Beyond the trick of others. This Polydore,—
The heir of Cymbeline and Britain, whom
The king his father call'd Guiderius,—Jove !
When on my three-foot stool I sit, and tell
The warlike feats I have done, his spirits fly out
Into my story : say,—“ Thus mine enemy fell ;
And thus I set my foot on his neck ”—even then
The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture
That acts my words. The younger brother, Cadwal,
(Once Arviragus,) in as like a figure
Strikes life into my speech, and shows much more
His own conceiving. Hark ! the game is rous'd !—
O Cymbeline ! heaven, and my conscience, knows
Thou didst unjustly banish me : whereon,
At three, and two years old, I stole these babes ;
Thinking to bar thee of succession, as
Thou rest'st me of my lands. Euriphile,
Thou wast their nurse ; they took thee for their mother,
And every day do honour to her grave :
Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan call'd,
They take for natural father. The game is up. [*Erit.*

SCENE IV.—*Near Milford-Haven.*

Enter PISANIO and IMOGEN.

Imo. Thou told'st me, when we came from horse, the
place

Was near at hand :—Ne'er long'd my mother so
To see me first, as I have now :—Pisanio ! Man !
Where is Posthumus ? What is in thy mind
That makes thee stare thus ? Wherefore breaks that sigh

From the inward of thee ? One, but painted thus,
Would be interpreted a thing perplex'd
Beyond self-explication : Put thyself
Into a 'haviour of less fear, ere wildness
Vanquish my staid senses. What 's the matter ?
Why tender'st thou that paper to me, with
A look untender ? If it be summer news,
Smile to 't before : if winterly, thou need'st
But keep that countenance still.—My husband's hand !
That drug-damn'd Italy hath out-craftied him,
And he 's at some hard point.—Speak, man ; thy tongue
May take off some extremity, which to read
Would be even mortal to me.

Pis. Please you read ;
And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing
The most disdain'd of fortune.

Imo. [*Reads*] "Thy mistress, Pisanio, hath played the strumpet in my bed : the testimonies whereof he bleeding in me. I speak not out of weak surmises ; but from proof as strong as my grief, and as certain as I expect my revenge. That part, thou, Pisanio, must act for me, if thy faith be not tainted with the breach of hers. Let thine own hands take away her life : I shall give thee opportunity at Milford-Haven : she hath my letter for the purpose : Where, if thou fear to strike, and to make me certain it is done, thou art the pander to her dishonour, and equally to me disloyal."

Pis. What shall I need to draw my sword ? the paper
Hath cut her throat already.—No, 't is slander,—
Whose edge is sharper than the sword ; whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms of Nile ; whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world,—kings, queens, and states,
Maids, matrons,—nay, the secrets of the grave
This viperous slander enters.—What cheer, madam ?

Imo. False to his bed ! What is it to be false ?
To lie in watch there, and to think on him ?
To weep 'twixt clock and clock ? if sleep charge nature,
To break it with a fearful dream of him,

And cry myself awake? that's false to his bed?
Is it?

Pis. Alas, good lady!

Imo. I false? Thy conscience witness:—Iachimo,
Thou didst accuse him of incontinency;
Thou then look'dst like a villain: now, methinks,
Thy favour's good enough.—Some jay of Italy,
Whose mother was her painting, hath betray'd him:
Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion;
And, for I am richer than to hang by the walls,
I must be ripp'd:—to pieces with me!—O,
Men's vows are women's traitors! All good seeming,
By thy revolt, O husband, shall be thought
Put on for villany; not born where 't grows,
But worn, a bait for ladies.

Pis. Good madam, hear me.

Imo. True honest men being heard, like false
Æneas,

Were, in his time, thought false: and Sinon's weeping
Did scandal many a holy tear; took pity
From most true wretchedness: So, thou, Posthumus,
Wilt lay the leaven on all proper men;
Goodly, and gallant, shall be false and perjur'd,
From thy great fail.—Come, fellow, be thou honest:
Do thou thy master's bidding: When thou see'st him
A little witness my obedience: Look!
I draw the sword myself: take it; and hit
The innocent mansion of my love, my heart:
Fear not; 't is empty of all things but grief:
Thy master is not there; who was, indeed,
The riches of it: Do his bidding; strike.
Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause.
But now thou seem'st a coward.

Pis. Hence, vile instrument!
Thou shalt not damn my hand.

Imo. Why, I must die;
And if I do not by thy hand, thou art

No servant of thy master's : Against self-slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand. Come, here 's my
heart ;

Something 's afore 't ;—Soft, soft ; we 'll no defence ;
Obedient as the scabbard.—What is here ?

The scriptures of the loyal Leonatus,
All turn'd to heresy ! Away, away,
Corrupters of my faith ! you shall no more
Be stomachers to my heart ! Thus may poor fools
Believe false teachers : Though those that are betray'd
Do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor
Stands in worse case of woe.

And thou, Posthumus, that didst set up
My disobedience 'gainst the king my father,
And make me put into contempt the suits
Of princely fellows, shalt hereafter find
It is no act of common passage, but
A strain of rareness : and I grieve myself,
To think when thou shalt be disedg'd by her
That now thou tir'st on, how thy memory
Will then be pang'd by me.—Prithee, despatch :
The lamb entreats the butcher : Where 's thy knife ?
Thou art too slow to do thy master's bidding,
When I desire it too.

Pis. O gracious lady,
Since I receiv'd command to do this business,
I have not slept one wink.

Imo. Do 't, and to bed then.

Pis. I 'll wake mine eye-balls blind first.

Imo. Wherefore then
Didst undertake it ? Why hast thou abus'd
So many miles, with a pretence ? this place ?
Mine action, and thine own ? our horses' labour ?
The time inviting thee ? the perturb'd court,
For my being absent ; whereunto I never
Purpose return ? Why hast thou gone so far

To be unbent when thou hast ta'en thy stand,
The elected deer before thee?

Pis. But to win time
To lose so bad employment : in the which
I have consider'd of a course. Good lady,
Hear me with patience.

Imo. Talk thy tongue weary ; speak :
I have heard I am a strumpet ; and mine ear,
Therein false struck, can take no greater wound,
Nor tent to bottom that. But speak.

Pis. Then, madam,
I thought you would not back again.

Imo. Most like ;
Bringing me here to kill me.

Pis. Not so, neither :
But if I were as wise as honest, then
My purpose would prove well. It cannot be
But that my master is abus'd :
Some villain, ay, and singular in his art,
Hath done you both this cursed injury.

Imo. Some Roman courtesan.

Pis. No, on my life.
I'll give but notice you are dead, and send him
Some bloody sign of it ; for 't is commanded
I should do so : You shall be miss'd at court,
And that will well confirm it.

Imo. Why, good fellow,
What shall I do the while ? Where bide ? How live ?
Or in my life what comfort, when I am
Dead to my husband ?

Pis. If you'll back to the court,—

Imo. No court, no father ; nor no more ado
With that harsh, noble, simple, nothing :
That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me
As fearful as a siege.

Pis. If not at court,
Then not in Britain must you bide.

Imo. Where then ?
Hath Britain all the sun that shines ? Day, night,
Are they not but in Britain ? I' the world's volume
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in it ;
In a great pool, a swan's nest. Prithee, think
There's livers out of Britain.

Pis. I am most glad
You think of other place. The ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow : Now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is—and but disguise
That which, to appear itself, must not yet be,
But by self-danger ;—you should tread a course
Pretty, and full of view : yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus : so nigh, at least,
That, though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear
As truly as he moves.

Imo. O, for such means !
Though peril to my modesty, not death on't,
I would adventure.

Pis. Well then, here's the point :
You must forget to be a woman ; change
Command into obedience ; fear, and niceness,
(The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
Woman its pretty self,) to a waggish courage ;
Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy, and
As quarrellous as the weasel ; nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it (but, O, the harder heart !
Alack no remedy !) to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan : and forget
Your laboursome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.

Imo. Nay, be brief :
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.

Pis. First, make yourself but like one.
 Fore-thinking this, I have already fit,
 ('T is in my cloak-bag,) doublet, hat, hose, all
 That answer to them : Would you, in their serving,
 And with what imitation you can borrow
 From youth of such a season, 'fore noble Lucius
 Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
 Wherein you are happy, (which you 'll make him know,
 If that his head have ear in music,) doubtless
 With joy he will embrace you ; for he 's honourable,
 And, doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad,
 You have me, rich ; and I will never fail
 Beginning, nor supplyment.

Imo. Thou art all the comfort
 The gods will diet me with. Prithee, away :
 There 's more to be consider'd ; but we 'll even
 All that good time will give us : This attempt
 I 'm soldier to, and will abide it with
 A prince's courage. Away, I prithee.

Pis. Well, madam, we must take a short farewell ;
 Lest, being miss'd, I be suspected of
 Your carriage from the court. My noble mistress,
 Here is a box : I had it from the queen ;
 What 's in 't is precious ; if you are sick at sea,
 Or stomach-qualm'd at land, a dram of this
 Will drive away distemper.—To some shade,
 And fit you to your manhood :—May the gods
 Direct you to the best !

Imo. Amen : I thank thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Room in Cymbeline's Palace.*

*Enter CYMBELINE, QUEEN, CLOTEN, LUCIUS, and
 Lords.*

Cym. Thus far ; and so farewell.

Luc.

Thanks, royal sir.

My emperor hath wrote ; I must from hence ;
And am right sorry that I must report ye
My master's enemy.

Cym. Our subjects, sir,
Will not endure his yoke ; and for ourself
To show less sovereignty than they, must need
Appear unkinglike.

Luc. So, sir, I desire of you
A conduct over land, to Milford-Haven.—
Madam, all joy befall your grace, and you !

Cym. My lords, you are appointed for that office ;
The due of honour in no point omit.
So, farewell, noble *LUCIUS*.

Luc. Your hand, my lord.

Clo. Receive it friendly : but from this time forth
I wear it as your enemy.

Luc. Sir, the event
Is yet to name the winner : Fare you well.

Cym. Leave not the worthy *LUCIUS*, good my lords,
Till he have cross'd the Severn.—Happiness !

[*Exeunt LUCIUS and Lords.*]

Queen. He goes hence frowning : but it honours us
That we have given him cause.

Clo. 'T is all the better ;
Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it.

Cym. *LUCIUS* hath wrote already to the emperor
How it goes here. It fits us therefore, ripely,
Our chariots and our horsemen be in readiness :
The powers that he already hath in *Gallia*
Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves
His war for Britain.

Queen. 'T is not sleepy business ;
But must be look'd to speedily, and strongly.

Cym. Our expectation that it would be thus
Hath made us forward. But, my gentle queen,
Where is our daughter ? She hath not appear'd
Before the Roman, nor to us hath tender'd

Where is she gone? Haply, despair hath seiz'd her;
Or, wing'd with fervour of her love, she's flown
To her desir'd Posthumus: Gone she is
To death, or to dishonour; and my end
Can make good use of either: She being down,
I have the placing of the British crown.

Re-enter CLOTEN.

How now, my son?

Clo. 'T is certain she is fled:
Go in, and cheer the king; he rages; none
Dare come about him.

Queen. All the better: May
This night forestall him of the coming day!

[Exit QUEEN.]

Clo. I love, and hate her: for she's fair and royal;
And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite
Than lady, ladies, woman; from every one
The best she hath, and she, of all compounded,
Outsells them all: I love her therefore. But,
Disdaining me, and throwing favours on
The low Posthumus, slanders so her judgment,
That what's else rare is chok'd; and, in that point,
I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed,
To be reveng'd upon her. For, when fools

Enter PISANIO.

Shall—Who is here? What! are you packing, sirrah?
Come hither: Ah, you precious pander! Villain,
Where is thy lady? In a word; or else
Thou art straightway with the fiends.

Pis.

O, good my lord!

Clo. Where is thy lady? or, by Jupiter,
I will not ask again. Close villain,
I'll have this secret from thy heart, or rip
Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthumus?
From whose so many weights of baseness cannot
A dram of worth be drawn.

Pis. Alas, my lord,
How can she be with him? When was she miss'd?
He is in Rome.

Clo. Where is she, sir? Come nearer;
No further halting: satisfy me home
What is become of her?

Pis. O, my all-worthy lord!

Clo. All-worthy villain!
Discover where thy mistress is, at once,
At the next word,—No more of worthy lord,—
Speak, or thy silence on the instant is
Thy condemnation and thy death.

Pis. Then, sir,
This paper is the history of my knowledge
Touching her flight. [*Presenting a letter.*]

Clo. Let's see 't:—I will pursue her
Even to Augustus' throne.

Pis. Or this, or perish.*
She's far enough: and what he learns by this,
May prove his travel, not her danger. [*Aside.*]

Clo. Humph!

Pis. I'll write to my lord she's dead. O Imogen,
Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again! [*Aside.*]

Clo. Sirrah, is this letter true?

Pis. Sir, as I think.

Clo. It is Posthumus' hand; I know 't.—Sirrah, if
thou wouldst not be a villain, but do me true service,
undergo those employments wherein I should have cause
to use thee, with a serious industry,—that is, what vil-
lany soe'er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and
truly,—I would think thee an honest man; thou
shouldst neither want my means for thy relief nor my
voice for thy preferment.

Pis. Well, my good lord.

* Pisanio, in giving Cloten a letter which is to mislead him, means to say, I must either adopt this stratagem, or perish by his fury.

Clo. Wilt thou serve me? For since patiently and constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that beggar Posthumus, thou canst not in the course of gratitude but be a diligent follower of mine. Wilt thou serve me?

Pis. Sir, I will.

Clo. Give me thy hand, here 's my purse. Hast any of thy late master's garments in thy possession?

Pis. I have, my lord, at my lodging, the same suit he wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

Clo. The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit hither: let it be thy first service; go.

Pis. I shall, my lord.

[*Exit.*

Clo. Meet thee at Milford-Haven:—I forgot to ask him one thing; I'll remember 't anon:—Even there, thou villain, Posthumus, will I kill thee.—I would these garments were come. She said upon a time (the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart), that she held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect than my noble and natural person, together with the adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my back will I ravish her: First kill him, and in her eyes; there shall she see my valour, which will then be a torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body,—and when my lust hath dined (which, as I say, to vex her I will execute in the clothes that she so praised), to the court I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despised me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge.

Re-enter PISANIO, with the clothes.

Be those the garments?

Pis. Ay, my noble lord.

Clo. How long is 't since she went to Milford-Haven?

Pis. She can scarce be there yet.

Clo. Bring this apparel to my chamber; that is the

To have begg'd, or bought what I have took : Good
troth,
I have stolen nought ; nor would not, though I had
found

Gold strew'd o' the floor. Here 's money for my meat :
I would have left it on the board, so soon
As I had made my meal ; and parted
With prayers for the provider.

Gui. Money, youth ?

Arv. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt !
As 't is no better reckon'd, but of those
Who worship dirty gods.

Imo. I see you are angry :
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.

Bel. Whither bound ?

Imo. To Milford-Haven.

Bel. What is your name ?

Imo. Fidele, sir : I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy ; he embark'd at Milford ;
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
I am fallen in this offence.

Bel. Prithee, fair youth,
Think us no churls ; nor measure our good minds
By this rude place we live in. Well encounter'd !
'T is almost night : you shall have better cheer
Ere you depart ; and thanks, to stay and eat it.
Boys, bid him welcome.

Gui. Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom.—In honesty,
I bid for you as I do buy.

Arv. I 'll make 't my comfort,
He is a man ; I 'll love him as my brother :—
And such a welcome as I 'd give to him
After long absence, such is yours :—Most welcome !
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

Imo.

'Mongst friends !

If brothers?—Would it had been so, that they
Had been my father's sons, then had my prize
Been less; and so more equal ballasting
To thee, Posthumus.

[*Aside.*

Bel. He wrings at some distress.

Gui. 'Would I could free 't!

Arv. Or I; whate'er it be,
What pain it cost, what danger! Gods!

Bel. Hark, boys. [*Whispering.*

Imo. Great men,
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves, and had the virtue
Which their own conscience seal'd them (laying by
That nothing gift of differing multitudes),^a
Could not out-peer these twain. Pardon me, gods!
I'd change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonatus false.

Bel. It shall be so.

Boys, we'll go dress our hunt.—Fair youth, come in:
Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we have supped,
We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.

Gui. Pray, draw near.

Arv. The night to the owl, and morn to the lark, less
welcome.

Imo. Thanks, sir.

Arv. I pray, draw near. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—Rome.

Enter Two Senators and Tribunes.

1 Sen. This is the tenour of the emperor's writ:

^a *Differing multitudes.* In the Second Part of 'Henry IV.'
we have—

"The still discordant, wavering multitude;"
and the word *differing* is most probably used here in the same
sense.

That since the common men are now in action
'Gainst the Pannonians and Dalmatians,
And that the legions now in Gallia are
Full weak to undertake our wars against
The fallen-off Britons, that we do incite
The gentry to this business. He creates
Lucius pro-consul : and to you the tribunes,
For this immediate levy, he commands
His absolute commission. Long live Cæsar !

Tri. Is Lucius general of the forces ?

2 Sen.

Ay

Tri. Remaining now in Gallia ?

1 Sen.

With those legions

Which I have spoke of, whereunto your levy
Must be supplyant : The words of your commission
Will tie you to the numbers, and the time
Of their despatch.

Tri.

We will discharge our duty. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Forest, near the Cave.**Enter CLOTEN.*

Clo. I am near to the place where they should meet, if Pisanio have mapped it truly. How fit his garments serve me! Why should his mistress, who was made by him that made the tailor, not be fit too? the rather (saving reverence of the word) for 't is said, a woman's fitness comes by fits. Therein I must play the workman. I dare speak it to myself, (for it is not vain-glory for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber,) I mean, the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less young, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in birth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single oppositions: yet this imperseverant^a thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is! Posthumus, thy head, which now is growing upon thy shoulders, shall within this hour be off; thy mistress enforced; thy garments cut to pieces before thy face: and all this done, spurn her home to her father: who may, haply, be a little angry for my so rough usage: but my mother, having power of his testiness, shall turn all into my commendations. My horse is tied up safe: Out, sword, and to a sore purpose! Fortune, put them into my hand! This is the very description of their meeting-place; and the fellow dares not deceive me.

[Exit.

^a *Imperseverant.* The *im* is a prefix to *perseverant*; in the same way as *impassioned*.

SCENE II.—*Before the Cave.*

*Enter, from the Cave, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS,
ARVIRAGUS, and IMOGEN.*

Bel. You are not well : [*To IMOGEN.*] remain here
in the cave ;

We 'll come to you after hunting.

Arv. Brother, stay here : [*To IMOGEN.*

Are we not brothers ?

Imo. So man and man should be ;

But clay and clay differs in dignity,

Whose dust is both alike. I am very sick.

Gui. Go you to hunting : I 'll abide with him.

Imo. So sick I am not ;—yet I am not well :

But not so citizen a wanton, as

To seem to die, ere sick : So please you, leave me ;

Stick to your journal course ; the breach of custom

Is breach of all. I am ill ; but your being by me

Cannot amend me : Society is no comfort

To one not sociable : I am not very sick,

Since I can reason of it. Pray you, trust me here :

I 'll rob none but myself ; and let me die,

Stealing so poorly.

Gui. I love thee ; I have spoke it :

How much the quantity, the weight as much,

As I do love my father.

Bel. What ? how ? how ?

Arv. If it be sin to say so, sir, I yoke me

In my good brother's fault : I know not why

I love this youth ; and I have heard you say,

Love's reason 's without reason ; the bier at door,

And a demand who is 't shall die, I 'd say,

" My father, not this youth."

Bel.

O noble strain ! [*Aside.*

O worthiness of nature ! breed of greatness !

Cowards father cowards, and base things sire base :

Nature hath meal and bran, contempt and grace.

I 'm not their father; yet who this should be
Doth miracle itself, lov'd before me.—
'T is the ninth hour of the morn.

Arv. Brother, farewell.

Imo. I wish ye sport.

Arv. You health.—So please you, sir.

Imo. [*Aside.*] These are kind creatures. Gods,
what lies I have heard!

Our courtiers say all 's savage, but at court :
Experience, O, thou disprov'st report!
The imperious seas breed monsters; for the dish,
Poor tributary rivers as sweet fish.
I am sick still; heart-sick :—Pisanio,
I 'll now taste of thy drug.

Gui. I could not stir him :
He said he was gentle, but unfortunate ;
Dishonestly afflicted, but yet honest.

Arv. Thus did he answer me : yet said, hereafter
I might know more.

Bel. To the field, to the field :—
We 'll leave you for this time; go in and rest.

Arv. We 'll not be long away.

Bel. Pray, be not sick,
For you must be our housewife.

Imo. Well, or ill,
I am bound to you.

Bel. And shalt be ever. [*Exit IMOGEN.*]
This youth, howe'er distress'd he appears, hath had
Good ancestors.

Arv. How angel-like he sings!

Gui. But his neat cookery! He cut our roots in
characters;
And sauc'd our broths, as Juno had been sick
And he her dieter.

Arv. Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh: as if the sigh
Was that it was, for not being such a smile;
The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly

From so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.

Gui. I do note
That grief and patience, root^d in him both,
Mingle their spurs^a together.

Arv. Grow, patience!
And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine
His perishing root with the increasing vine!

Bel. It is great morning. Come; away.—Who's there?

Enter CLOTEN.

Clo. I cannot find those runagates: that villain
Hath mock'd me:—I am faint.

Bel. Those runagates!
Means he not us? I partly know him; 't is
Cloten, the son o' the queen. I fear some ambush.
I saw him not these many years, and yet
I know 't is he:—We are held as outlaws:—Hence.

Gui. He is but one: You and my brother search
What companies are near: pray you, away;
Let me alone with him. [*Exeunt BEL. and ARV.*]

Clo. Soft! What are you
That fly me thus? some villain mountaineers?
I have heard of such.—What slave art thou?

Gui. A thing
More slavish did I ne'er than answering
"A slave" without a knock.

Clo. Thou art a robber,
A law-breaker, a villain: Yield thee, thief.

Gui. To who? to thee? What art thou? Have not I
An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?
Thy words, I grant, are bigger: for I wear not
My dagger in my mouth. Say, what thou art,
Why I should yield to thee?

Clo. Thou villain base,
Know'st me not by my clothes?

^a *Spurs.* Pope calls this an old word for the fibres of a tree. We cannot find any authority for his assertion. The support of a post placed in the ground is still technically called a *spur*.

Gui. No, nor thy tailor, rascal,
Who is thy grandfather; he made those clothes,
Which, as it seems, make thee.

Clo. Thou precious varlet,
My tailor made them not.

Gui. Hence, then, and thank
The man that gave them thee. Thou art some fool;
I am loath to beat thee.

Clo. Thou injurious thief,
Hear but my name, and tremble.

Gui. What's thy name?

Clo. Cloten, thou villain.

Gui. Cloten, thou double villain, be thy name,
I cannot tremble at it; were 't toad, or adder, spider,
'T would move me sooner.

Clo. To thy further fear,
Nay, to thy mere confusion, thou shalt know
I 'm son to the queen.

Gui. I 'm sorry for 't; not seeming
So worthy as thy birth.

Clo. Art not afeard?

Gui. Those that I reverence those I fear; the wise:
At fools I laugh, not fear them.

Clo. Die the death:
When I have slain thee with my proper hand,
I 'll follow those that even now fled hence,
And on the gates of Lud's town set your heads:
Yield, rustic mountaineer. [*Exeunt, fighting*]

Enter BELARIUS and ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. No company's abroad.

Arv. None in the world: You did mistake him, sure.

Bel. I cannot tell: Long is it since I saw him,
But time hath nothing blurr'd those lines of favour
Which then he wore; the snatches in his voice,
And burst of speaking, were as his: I am absolute
'T was very Cloten.

Arv. In this place we left them:

I wish my brother make good time with him,
You say he is so fell.

Bel. Being scarce made up,
I mean, to man, he had not apprehension
Of roaring terrors, for defect of judgment,
As oft the cause of fear : But see, thy brother.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS, with CLOTEN's head.

Gui. This Cloten was a fool ; an empty purse,—
There was no money in 't : not Hercules
Could have knock'd out his brains, for he had none :
Yet I not doing this, the fool had borne
My head, as I do his.

Bel. What hast thou done ?

Gui. I am perfect, what : cut off one Cloten's head,
Son to the queen, after his own report ;
Who call'd me traitor, mountaineer ; and swore,
With his own single hand he 'd take us in,
Displace our heads, where (thank the gods!) they grow,
And set them on Lud's town.

Bel. We are all undone.

Gui. Why, worthy father, what have we to lose,
But, that he swore to take, our lives ? The law
Protects not us : Then why should we be tender
To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us ;
Play judge and executioner, all himself,
For^a we do fear the law ? What company
Discover you abroad ?

Bel. No single soul
Can we set eye on, but in all safe reason
He must have some attendants. Though his humour
Was nothing but mutation,—ay, and that
From one bad thing to worse,—not frenzy, not
Absolute madness could so far have rav'd,
To bring him here alone : Although, perhaps,
It may be heard at court, that such as we
Cave here, hunt here, are outlaws, and in time

^a *For*, in the sense of because.

May make some stronger head : the which he hearing,
(As it is like him,) might break out, and swear
He 'd fetch us in ; yet is 't not probable
To come alone, either he so undertaking,
Or they so suffering : then on good ground we fear,
If we do fear this body hath a tail
More perilous than the head.

Arv. Let ordinance
Come as the gods foresay it : howso'er,
My brother hath done well.

Bel. I had no mind
To hunt this day : the boy Fidele's sickness
Did make my way long forth.

Gui. With his own sword,
Which he did wave against my throat, I have ta'en
His head from him : I 'll throw 't into the creek
Behind our rock ; and let it to the sea,
And tell the fishes he 's the queen's son, Cloten :
That 's all I reck. [*Exit.*]

Bel. I fear, 't will be reveng'd :
'Would, Polydore, thou hadst not done 't ! though valour
Becomes thee well enough.

Arv. 'Would I had done 't,
So the revenge alone pursued me !—Polydore,
I love thee brotherly ; but envy much
Thou hast robb'd me of this deed : I would revenges,
That possible strength might meet, would seek us through
And put us to our answer.

Bel. Well, 't is done :—
We 'll hunt no more to-day, nor seek for danger
Where there 's no profit. I prithee, to our rock ;
You and Fidele play the cooks : I 'll stay
Till hasty Polydore return, and bring him
To dinner presently.

Arv. Poor sick Fidele !
I 'll willingly to him : To gain his colour,
I 'd let a parish of such Clotens blood,
And praise myself for charity. [*Exit.*]

Bel. O thou goddess,
 Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st :
 In these two princely boys ! They are as gentle
 As zephyrs, blowing below the violet,
 Not wagging his sweet head : and yet as rough,
 Their royal blood enchain'd, as the mad'st wind,
 That by the top doth take the mountain pine
 And make him stoop to the vale. 'T is wonder
 That an invisible instinct should frame them
 To royalty unlearn'd ; honour untaught ;
 Civility not seen from other : valour,
 That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
 As if it had been sow'd ! Yet still it 's strange
 What Cloten's being here to us portends,
 Or what his death will bring us.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS.

Gui. Where 's my brother ?
 I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream,
 In embassy to his mother ; his body 's hostage
 For his return. *[Solemn music.]*

Bel. My ingenious instrument !
 Hark, Polydore, it sounds ! But what occasion
 Hath Cadwal now to give it motion ? Hark !

Gui. Is he at home ?

Bel. He went hence even now

Gui. What does he mean ? since death of my dear'st
 mother

It did not speak before. All solemn things
 Should answer solemn accidents. The matter ?
 Triumphs for nothing, and lamenting toys,
 Is jollity for apes and grief for boys.
 Is Cadwal mad ?

*Re-enter ARVIRAGUS, bearing IMOGEN as dead in
 his arms.*

Bel. Look, here he comes,
 And brings the dire occasion in his arms,
 Of what we blame him for !

Arv. The bird is dead,
That we have made so much on. I had rather
Have skipp'd from sixteen years of age to sixty,
To have turn'd my leaping time into a crutch,
Than have seen this.

Gui. O sweetest, fairest lily !
My brother wears thee not the one-half so well,
As when thou grew'st thyself.

Bel. O, melancholy !
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom ? find
The ooze, to show what coast thy sluggish crare ^a
Might easiliest harbour in ?—Thou blessed thing !
Jove knows what man thou mightst have made ; but I,
Thou diedst, a most rare boy, of melancholy !
How found you him ?

Arv. Stark, ^b as you see :
Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,
Not as death's dart, being laugh'd at : his right cheek
Reposing on a cushion.

Gui. Where ?

Arv. O' the floor ;
His arms thus leagued : I thought he slept ; and put
My clouted brogues ^c from off my feet, whose rudeness
Answer'd my steps too loud.

Gui. Why, he but sleeps :
If he be gone, he 'll make his grave a bed ;
With female fairies will his tomb be haunted,
And worms will not come to thee.

Arv. With fairest flowers,
Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I 'll sweeten thy sad grave : Thou shalt not lack
The flower that 's like thy face, pale primrose ; nor
The azur'd hare-bell, like thy veins ; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Outsweeten'd not thy breath : the ruddock would,

^a *Crare* is a small vessel ; and the word is often used by
Holinshed and by Drayton.

^b *Stark*—stiff.

^c *Brogues*—rude shoes.

With charitable bill (O bill, sore-shaming
Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
Without a monument!) bring thee all this;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.

Gui. Prithee, have done;
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious. Let us bury him,
And not protract with admiration what
Is now due debt.—To the grave.

Arv. Say, where shall 's lay him?

Gui. By good Euriphile, our mother.

Arv. Be 't so:

And let us, Polydore, though now our voices
Have got the mannish crack, sing him to the ground,
As once our mother; use like note, and words,
Save that Euriphile must be Fidele.

Gui. Cadwal,
I cannot sing: I 'll weep, and word it with thee:
For notes of sorrow, out of tune, are worse
Than priests and fanes that lie.

Arv. We 'll speak it then.

Bel. Great griefs, I see, medicine the less: for Cloten
Is quite forgot. He was a queen's son, boys:
And, though he came our enemy, remember
He was paid for that: Though mean and mighty, rotting
Together, have one dust; yet reverence
(That angel of the world) doth make distinction
Of place 'tween high and low. Our foe was princely;
And though you took his life, as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince.

Gui. Pray you, fetch him hither.
Thersites' body is as good as Ajax,
When neither are alive.

Arv. If you 'll go fetch him,
We 'll say our song the whilst.—Brother, begin. [*Ex. BEL.*]

Gui. Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to the east:
My father hath a reason for 't.

Arv. "T is true.

Gui. Come on then, and remove him.

Arv. So,—begin.

SONG.

Gui. Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone and t'n'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Arv. Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe, and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Gui. Fear no more the light'ning flash;

Arv. Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;

Gui. Fear not slander, censure rash;

Arv. Thou hast finish'd joy and moan.

Both. All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

Gui. No exorciser harm thee!

Arv. Nor no witchcraft charm thee!

Gui. Ghost unlaid forbear thee!

Arv. Nothing ill come near thee!

Both. Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave!

Re-enter BELARIUS, with the body of CLOTEN.

Gui. We have done our obsequies: Come, lay him down.

Bel. Here's a few flowers; but about midnight, more:
The herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
Are strewings fitt'st for graves.—Upon their faces:—
You were as flowers, now wither'd: even so
These herb'lets shall, which we upon you strow.—
Come on, away: apart upon our knees.
The ground, that gave them first, has them again:
Their pleasures here are past, so is their pain.

[*Exeunt BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, and ARVIRAGUS.*

Imo. [*Awaking.*] Yes, sir, to Milford-Haven; Which is the way?

I thank you.—By yon bush?—Pray, how far thither? 'Ods pittikins!—can it be six miles yet?—

I have gone all night:—'Faith, I'll lie down and sleep. But, soft! no bedfellow:—O, gods and goddesses!

[*Seeing the body.*]

These flowers are like the pleasures of the world;
This bloody man, the care on't.—I hope I dream;
For, so, I thought I was a cave-keeper,
And cook to honest creatures: But 't is not so;
'T was but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
Which the brain makes of fumes: Our very eyes,
Are sometimes like our judgments, blind. Good faith,
I tremble still with fear: But if there be
Yet left in heaven as small a drop of pity
As a wren's eye, fear'd gods, a part of it!
The dream 's here still: even when I wake it is
Without me, as within me; not imagin'd, felt.
A headless man!—The garments of Posthumus!
I know the shape of his leg: this is his hand;
His foot Mercurial: his Martial thigh;
The brawns of Hercules: but his Jovial face—
Murder in heaven?—How?—'T is gone.—Pisanio,
All curses madd'd Hecuba gave the Greeks,
And mine to boot, be darted on thee! Thou,
Conspir'd with that irregular^a devil, Cloten,
Hast here cut off my lord.—To write and read
Be henceforth treacherous!—Damn'd Pisanio
Hath with his forged letters,—damn'd Pisanio—
From this most bravest vessel of the world
Struck the main-top!—O, Posthumus! alas,
Where is thy head? where 's that? Ah me! where 's that?
Pisanio might have kill'd thee at the heart,
And left this head on.—How should this be? Pisanio?
'T is he, and Cloten: malice and lucre in them

^a *Irregular*—irregular—disorderly. The word is only found in this passage of Shakspeare.

Have laid this woe here. O, 't is pregnant, pregnant !
The drug he gave me, which, he said, was precious
And cordial to me, have I not found it
Murd'rous to the senses ? That confirms it home :
This is Pisanio's deed, and Cloten's : O !—
Give colour to my pale cheek with thy blood,
That we the horrid may seem to those
Which chance to find us : O, my lord, my lord !

*Enter Lucius, a Captain, and other Officers, and
a Soothsayer.*

Cap. To them, the legions garrison'd in Gallia,
After your will, have cross'd the sea ; attending
You here at Milford-Haven, with your ships :
They are here in readiness.

Luc. But what from Rome ?

Cap. The senate hath stirr'd up the confiners,
And gentlemen of Italy ; most willing spirits
That promise noble service : and they come
Under the conduct of bold Iachimo,
Sienna's brother.

Luc. When expect you them ?

Cap. With the next benefit o' the wind.

Luc. This forwardness
Makes our hopes fair. Command, our present numbers
Be muster'd ; bid the captains look to 't.—Now, sir,
What have you dream'd, of late, of this war's purpose ?

Sooth. Last night the very gods show'd me a vision :
(I fast, and pray'd, for their intelligence,) Thus :—
I saw Jove's bird, the Roman eagle, wing'd
From the spongy south to this part of the west,
There vanish'd in the sunbeams : which portends
(Unless my sins abuse my divination)
Success to the Roman host.

Luc. Dream often so,
And never false.—Soft, ho ! what trunk is here
Without his top ? The ruin speaks that sometime
It was a worthy building.—How ! a page !

Or dead, or sleeping on him? But dead, rather :
 For nature doth abhor to make his bed
 With the defunct, or sleep upon the dead.—
 Let's see the boy's face.

Cap. He is alive, my lord.

Luc. He'll then instruct us of this body.—Young
 one,

Inform us of thy fortunes ; for, it seems
 They crave to be demanded : Who is this
 Thou mak'st thy bloody pillow? Or who was he,
 That, otherwise than noble nature did,
 Hath alter'd that good picture? What's thy interest
 In this sad wreck? How came it? Who is it?
 What art thou?

Imo. I am nothing : or if not,
 Nothing to be were better. This was my master.
 A very valiant Briton, and a good,
 That here by mountaineers lies slain :—Alas !
 There are no more such masters : I may wander
 From east to occident, cry out for service,
 Try many, all good, serve truly, never
 Find such another master.

Luc. 'Lack, good youth!
 Thou mov'st no less with thy complaining, than
 Thy master in bleeding ; Say his name, good friend.

Imo. Richard du Champ. If I do lie, and do
 No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
 They'll pardon it. [*Aside.*] Say you, sir?

Luc. Thy name?

Imc. Fidele, sir.

Luc. Thou dost approve thyself the very same.
 Thy name well fits thy faith ; thy faith thy name.
 Wilt take thy chance with me? I will not say
 Thou shalt be so well master'd ; but, be sure,
 No less belov'd. The Roman emperor's letters,
 Sent by a consul to me, should not sooner
 Than thine own worth prefer thee. Go with me.

Imo. I'll follow, sir. But first, an't please the gods,

I'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
As these poor pickaxes can dig : and when
With wild wood-leaves and weeds I have strew'd his
grave,

And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep, and sigh ;
And, leaving so his service, follow you,
So please you entertain me.

Luc.

Ay, good youth ;

And rather father thee than master thee.—

My friends,

The boy hath taught us manly duties : Let us

Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can,

And make him with our pikes and partisans

A grave : Come ; arm him.*—Boy, he is preferr'd

By thee to us ; and he shall be interr'd

As soldiers can. Be cheerful ; wipe thine eyes :

Some falls are means the happier to arise. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Room in Cymbeline's Palace.*

Enter CYMBELINE, Lords, and PISANIO.

Cym. Again ; and bring me word how 't is with her.
A fever with the absence of her son ;
A madness, of which her life 's in danger :—Heavens,
How deeply you at once do touch me ! Imogen,
The great part of my comfort, gone ; my queen
Upon a desperate bed, and in a time
When fearful wars point at me ; her son gone,
So needful for this present : It strikes me, past
The hope of comfort.—But for thee, fellow,
Who needs must know of her departure, and
Dost seem so ignorant, we'll enforce it from thee
By a sharp torture.

Pis.

Sir, my life is yours,

I humbly set it at your will : But for my mistress,

I nothing know where she remains, why gone,

* *Arm him*—take him in your arms.

Nor when she purposes return. 'Beseech your highness,
Hold me your loyal servant.

1 *Lord.* Good my liege,
The day that she was missing he was here :
I dare be bound he 's true, and shall perform
All parts of his subjection loyally.
For Cloten,—

There wants no diligence in seeking him,
And will, no doubt, be found.

Cym. The time is troublesome :
We 'll slip you for a season ; but our jealousy. [*To Pis.*
Does yet depend.^a

1 *Lord.* So please your majesty,
The Roman legions, all from Gallia drawn,
Are landed on your coast ; with a supply
Of Roman gentlemen, by the senate sent.

Cym. Now for the counsel of my son and queen !
I am amaz'd with matter.

1 *Lord.* Good my liege,
Your preparation can affront no less
Than what you hear of : come more, for more you 're
ready ;

The want is, but to put those powers in motion
That long to move.

Cym. I thank you : Let 's withdraw ,
And meet the time, as it seeks us. We fear not
What can from Italy annoy us ; but
We grieve at chances here.—Away. [*Exeunt.*

Pis. I heard no letter^b from my master since
I wrote him Imogen was slain : 'T is strange :
Nor hear I from my mistress, who did promise
To yield me often tidings : Neither know I
What is betid to Cloten ; but remain
Perplex'd in all. The heavens still must work :

^a *Does yet depend*—is yet depending, as we say of an action at law.

^b Malone suggests that by *letter* is not meant an epistle ; but that the phrase is equivalent to *I heard no syllable*.

Wherein I am false I am honest ; not true to be true.
These present wars shall find I love my country,
Even to the note o' the king, or I 'll fall in them.
All other doubts by time let them be clear'd :
Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer'd. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Before the Cave.*

Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, and ARVIRAGUS.

Gui. The noise is round about us.

Bel. Let us from it.

Arv. What pleasure, sir, find we in life, to lock it
From action and adventure ?

Gui. Nay, what hope
Have we in hiding us ? this way, the Romans
Must or for Britons slay us ; or receive us
For barbarous and unnatural revolts
During their use, and slay us after.

Bel. Sons,
We 'll higher to the mountains ; there secure us.
To the king's party there 's no going : newness
Of Cloten's death (we being not known, not muster'd
Among the bands) may drive us to a render
Where we have liv'd ; and so extort from us that
Which we have done, whose answer would be death
Drawn on with torture.

Gui. This is, sir, a doubt
In such a time nothing becoming you,
Nor satisfying us.

Arv. It is not likely
That when they hear the Roman horses neigh,
Behold their quarter'd fires, have both their eyes
And ears so cloy'd importantly as now,
That they will waste their time upon our note,
To know from whence we are.

Bel. O, I am known
Of many in the army : many years,
Though Cloten then but young, you see, not wore him

From my remembrance. And, besides, the king
 Hath not deserv'd my service, nor your loves ;
 Who find in my exile the want of breeding,
 The certainty of this hard life ; aye hopeless
 To have the courtesy your cradle promis'd,
 But to be still hot summer's tanlings, and
 The shrinking slaves of winter.

Gui. Than be so,
 Better to cease to be. Pray, sir, to the army :
 I and my brother are not known ; yourself
 So out of thought, and thereto so o'ergrown,
 Cannot be question'd.

Arr. By this sun that shines,
 I'll thither : What thing is it, that I never
 Did see man die ? scarce ever look'd on blood,
 But that of coward hares, hot goats, and venison ?
 Never bestrid a horse, save one, that had
 A rider like myself, who ne'er wore rowel
 Nor iron on his heel ? I am asham'd
 To look upon the holy sun, to have
 The benefit of his bless'd beams, remaining
 So long a poor unknown.

Gui. By heavens, I'll go :
 If you will bless me, sir, and give me leave,
 I'll take the better care ; but if you will not,
 The hazard therefore due fall on me, by
 The hands of Romans !

Arr. So say I ; Amen.

Bel. No reason I, since of your lives you set
 So slight a valuation, should reserve
 My crack'd one to more care. Have with you, boys :
 If in your country wars you chance to die,
 That is my bed too, lads, and there I'll lie :
 Lead, lead.—The time seems long : their blood thinks
scorn, [Aside.
 Till it fly out and show them princes born. [Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Field between the British and Roman Camps.*

Enter POSTHUMUS, with a bloody handkerchief.

Post. Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee; for I wish'd
Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. You married ones,
If each of you should take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves,
For wrying^a but a little!—O, Pisanio!
Every good servant does not all commands;
No bond, but to do just ones. Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had liv'd to put on^b this: so had you saved
The noble Imogen to repent; and struck
Me, wretch, more worth your vengeance: But, alack,
You snatch some hence for little faults; that's love,
To have them fall no more: you some permit
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,^c
And make them dread it, to the doers' thrift.
But Imogen is your own: Do your best wills,
And make me bless'd to obey!—I am brought hither

^a *Wrying*. The use of *wry* as a verb is uncommon. We have a passage in Sidney's 'Arcadia' which is at once an example and an explanation:—"That from the right line of virtue are *wryed* to these crooked shifts."

^b *To put on*—to instigate.

^c "The last deed is certainly not the oldest," says Dr. Johnson. That is, perhaps, prosaically true; but as the man who goes on in the commission of ill is older when he commits the last ill than when he committed the first, we do not believe that Shakspeare, as Malone says, "*inadvertently* considered the latter evil deed as the elder." The confusion, if there be any, in the text may be reconciled by Bacon's notion, that what we call the old world is really the young world; and so a man's first sin is his youngest sin.

Among the Italian gentry, and to fight
Against my lady's kingdom: 'T is enough
That, Britain, I have kill'd thy mistress. Peace!
I'll give no wound to thee. Therefore, good heavens,
Hear patiently my purpose; I'll disrobe me
Of these Italian weeds, and suit myself
As does a Briton peasant: so I'll fight
Against the part I come with; so I'll die
For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life
Is, every breath, a death: and thus, unknown,
Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril
Myself I'll dedicate. Let me make men know
More valour in me, than my habits show.
Gods, put the strength o' the Leonati in me!
To shame the guise o' the world, I will begin
The fashion less without, and more within. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*The same.*

Enter at one door LUCIUS, IACHIMO, and the Roman army; and the British army at another. LEONATUS POSTHUMUS following, like a poor soldier. They march over, and go out. Then enter again in skirmish, IACHIMO and POSTHUMUS: he vanquisheth and disarmeth IACHIMO, and then leaves him.^a

Iach. The heaviness and guilt within my bosom
Takes off my manhood: I have belied a lady,
The princess of this country, and the air on't

^a It will be observed throughout this act that the stage-directions are extremely full, and that the action of the drama at the close of the third scene is entirely what was called a dumb show. The drama preceding Shakspeare was full of such examples. But Shakspeare uniformly rejected the practice, except in this instance. We have followed in the stage-directions the original copy, which has been departed from by the modern editors.

Revengingly enfeeble me. Or, could this carl,^a
 A very drudge of nature's, have subdued me,
 In my profession? Knighthoods and honours, borne
 As I wear mine, are titles but of scorn.
 If that thy gentry, Britain, go before
 This lout, as he exceeds our lords, the odds
 Is, that we scarce are men, and you are gods. [*Exit.*]

The battle continues; the Britons fly; CYMBELINE is taken; then enter, to his rescue, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, and ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. Stand, stand! We have the advantage of the ground;
 The lane is guarded; nothing routs us but
 The villany of our fears.

Gai., Arv. Stand, stand, and fight!
Enter POSTHUMUS, and seconds the Britons: They rescue CYMBELINE, and exeunt. Then, enter LUCIUS, IACHIMO, and IMOGEN.

Luc. Away, boy, from the troops, and save thyself:
 For friends kill friends, and the disorder's such
 As war were hood-wink'd.

Iach. 'T is their fresh supplies.

Luc. It is a day turn'd strangely: Or sometimes
 Let's re-enforce, or fly. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Part of the Field.*

Enter POSTHUMUS and a British Lord.

Lord. Cam'st thou from where they made the stand?

Post. I did;

Though you, it seems, come from the fliers.

Lord. I did.

Post. No blame be to you, sir; for all was lost,
 But that the heavens fought: The king himself
 Of his wings destitute, the army broken,

^a *Carl*—churl.

And but the backs of Britons seen, all flying
Through a strait lane ; the enemy full-hearted,
Lolling the tongue with slaughtering, having work
More plentiful than tools to do 't, struck down
Some mortally, some slightly touch'd, some falling
Merely through fear ; that the strait pass was damm'd
With dead men, hurt behind, and cowards living
To die with lengthen'd shame.

Lord. Where was this lane ?

Post. Close by the battle, ditch'd, and wall'd with
turf ;

Which gave advantage to an ancient soldier,—
An honest one, I warrant ; who deserv'd
So long a breeding as his white beard came to,
In doing this for his country ;—athwart the lane,
He, with two striplings, (lads more like to run
The country base,* than to commit such slaughter ;
With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer
Than those for preservation cas'd, or shame,)
Made good the passage ; cried to those that fled,
“ Our Britain's harts die flying, not our men :
To darkness fleet, souls that fly backwards ! Stand :
Or we are Romans, and will give you that
Like beasts, which you shun beastly ; and may save,
But to look back in frown : stand, stand.”—These three,
Three thousand confident, in act as many,
(For three performers are the file when all
The rest do nothing,) with this word, “ stand, stand,”
Accommodated by the place, more charming
With their own nobleness, (which could have turn'd
A distaff to a lance,) gilded pale looks,
Part shame, part spirit renew'd ; that some, turn'd
coward

But by example (O, a sin in war,
Damn'd in the first beginners !) 'gan to look
The way that they did, and to grin like lions

* *Country-base*—the rustic game of *prison bars*, or *prison base*.

Upon the pikes o' the hunters. Then began
A stop i' the chaser, a retire; anon,
A rout, confusion thick: Forthwith, they fly
Chickens, the way which they stoop'd eagles; slaves,
The strides they victors made: And now our cowards
(Like fragments in hard voyages) became
The life o' the need, having found the back-door open
Of the unguarded hearts: Heavens, how they wound!
Some slain before; some dying; some their friends
O'er-borne i' the former wave; ten, chas'd by one,
Are now each one the slaughter-man of twenty:
Those that would die or ere resist are grown
The mortal bugs^a o' the field.

Lord. This was strange chance:
A narrow lane! an old man, and two boys!

Post. Nay, do not wonder at it: You are made
Rather to wonder at the things you hear,
Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon 't,
And vent it for a mockery? Here is one:
"Two boys, an old man twice a boy, a lane,
Preserv'd the Britons, was the Romans' bane."

Lord. Nay, be not angry, sir.

Post. 'Lack, to what end!
Who dares not stand his foe, I'll be his friend:
For if he'll do, as he is made to do,
I know he'll quickly fly my friendship too.
You have put me into rhyme.

Lord. Farewell; you are angry. [*Exit.*]

Post. Still going?—This is a lord! O noble misery!
To be i' the field, and ask what news of me!
To-day, how many would have given their honours
To have sav'd their carcasses? took heel to do 't,
And yet died too? I, in mine own woe charm'd,
Could not find death where I did hear him groan;
Nor feel him where he struck: Being an ugly monster,
'T is strange he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds,

^a Bugs—terrors.

Sweet words ; or hath more ministers than we
That draw his knives i' the war.—Well, I will find
him :

For being now a favourer to the Briton,
No more a Briton, I have resum'd again
The part I came in : Fight I will no more,
But yield me to the veriest hind that shall
Once touch my shoulder. Great the slaughter is
Here made by the Roman ; great the answer be
Britons must take ; For me, my ransom 's death ;
On either side I come to spend my breath ;
Which neither here I 'll keep, nor bear again,
But end it by some means for Imogen.

Enter two Captains, and Soldiers.

1 *Cap.* Great Jupiter be prais'd ! Lucius is taken :
'T is thought the old man and his sons were angels.

2 *Cap.* There was a fourth man, in a silly habit,
That gave the affront^a with them.

1 *Cap.* So 't is reported :
But none of them can be found.—Stand ! who is there ?

Post. A Roman ;
Who had not now been drooping here, if seconds
Had answer'd him.

2 *Cap.* Lay hands on him ; a dog !
A leg of Rome shall not return to tell
What crows have peck'd them here : He brags his
service
As if he were of note : bring him to the king.

*Enter CYMBELINE, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVI-
RAGUS, PISANIO, and Roman Captives. The Cap-
tains present POSTHUMUS to CYMBELINE, who
delivers him over to a Gaoler.*

^a *Affront*—encounter.

SCENE IV.—*A Prison.*

Enter POSTHUMUS, and two Gaolers.

1 *Gaol.* You shall not now be stolen, you have locks
upon you ;

So, graze, as you find pasture.

2 *Gaol.*

Ay, or a stomach.

[*Exeunt Gaolers.*]

Post. Most welcome, bondage ! for thou art a way,
I think, to liberty : Yet am I better
Than one that 's sick o' the gout : since he had rather
Groan so in perpetuity, than be cur'd
By the sure physician, death, who is the key
To unbar these locks. My conscience ! thou art fetter'd
More than my shanks and wrists : You good gods, give
me

The penitent instrument, to pick that bolt,
Then, free for ever ! Is 't enough I am sorry ?
So children temporal fathers do appease ;
Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent ?
I cannot do it better than in gyves,
Desir'd, more than constrain'd : to satisfy,
If of my freedom 't is the main part, take
No stricter render of me, than my all.
I know you are more clement than vile men,
Who of their broken debtors take a third,
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again
On their abatement : that 's not my desire :
For Imogen's dear life take mine ; and though
'T is not so dear, yet 't is a life ; you coin'd it :
'Tween man and man, they weigh not every stamp ;
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake :
You rather mine, being yours : And so, great powers,
If you will take this audit, take this life,
And cancel these cold bonds. O Imogen !
I 'll speak to thee in silence. [*He sleeps.*

Solemn Music. Enter, as in an apparition, SICILIUS LEONATUS, father to POSTHUMUS, an old man, attired like a warrior; leading in his hand an ancient matron, his wife, and mother to POSTHUMUS, with music before them. Then, after other music, follow the Two young Leonati, brothers to POSTHUMUS, with wounds, as they died in the wars. They circle POSTHUMUS round, as he lies sleeping.

Sici. No more, thou thunder-master, show
 Thy spite on mortal flies;
 With Mars fall out, with Juno chide,
 That thy adulteries
 Rates and revenges.
 Hath my poor boy done aught but well
 Whose face I never saw?
 I died, whilst in the womb he stay'd
 Attending Nature's law.
 Whose father then (as men report,
 Thou orphans' father art,)
 Thou shouldst have been, and shielded him
 From this earth-vexing smart.

Moth. Lucina lent not me her aid,
 But took me in my throes;
 That from me was Posthumus ripp'd,
 Came crying 'mongst his foes,
 A thing of pity!

Sici. Great nature, like his ancestry,
 Moulded the stuff so fair,
 That he deserv'd the praise o' the world,
 As great Sicilius' heir.

1 *Bro.* When once he was mature for man,
 In Britain where was he
 That could stand up his parallel;
 Or fruitful object be
 In eye of Imogen, that best
 Could deem his dignity?

Moth. With marriage wherefore was he mock'd,
 To be exil'd, and thrown
 From Leonati's seat, and cast
 From her his dearest one,
 Sweet Imogen?

Sici. Why did you suffer Iachimo,
 Slight thing of Italy,
 To taint his nobler heart and brain
 With needless jealousy;

And to become the geck and scorn
O' the other's villany?

2 *Bro.* For this, from stiller seats we came,
Our parents and us twain,
That, striking in our country's cause,
Fell bravely, and were slain;
Our fealty, and 'Tenantius' right,
With honour to maintain.

1 *Bro.* Like hardiment Posthumus hath
To Cymbeline perform'd:
Then Jupiter, thou king of gods,
Why hast thou thus adjourn'd
The graces for his merits due;
Being all to dolours turn'd?

Sici. Thy crystal window ope; look out,
No longer exercise,
Upon a valiant race, thy harsh
And potent injuries.

Moth. Since, Jupiter, our son is good,
Take off his miseries.

Sici. Peep through thy marble mansion; help!
Or we poor ghosts will cry
To the shining synod of the rest,
Against thy deity.

2 *Bro.* Help, Jupiter; or we appeal,
And from thy justice fly.

*JUPITER descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle:
he throws a thunder-bolt. The Ghosts fall on their knees.*

Jup. No more, you petty spirits of region low,
Offend our hearing: hush!—How dare you ghosts
Accuse the thunderer, whose bolt you know,
Sky-planted, batters all rebelling coasts?
Poor shadows of Elysium, hence: and rest
Upon your never-withering banks of flowers:
Be not with mortal accidents oppress;
No care of yours it is; you know, 'tis ours.
Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,
The more delay'd, delighted. Be content;
Your low-laid son our godhead will uplift:
His comforts thrive, his trials well are spent.
Our Jovial star reign'd at his birth, and in
Our temple was he married.—Rise, and fade!—
He shall be lord of lady Imogen,
And happier much by his affliction made.

This tablet lay upon his breast; wherein
 Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine;
 And so, away: no farther with your din
 Express impatience, lest you stir up mine.—
 Mount, eagle, to my palace crystalline. [Ascends.
 Sici. He came in thunder; his celestial breath
 Was sulphurous to smell: the holy eagle
 Stoop'd, as to foot us. his ascension is
 More sweet than our bless'd fields. his royal bird
 Prunes the immortal wing, and cloyes his beak,
 As when his god is pleas'd.
 All. Thanks, Jupiter!
 Sici. The marble pavement closes, he is enter'd
 His radiant roof:—Away! and, to be blest,
 Let us with care perform his great behest. [Ghosts vanish.

Post. [Waking.] Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire,
 and begot

A father to me: and thou hast created
 A mother, and two brothers; But—O scorn!—
 Gone! they went hence so soon as they were born.
 And so I am awake. Poor wretches that depend
 On greatness' favour dream as I have doue;
 Wake, and find nothing. But, alas, I swerve:
 Many dream not to find, neither deserve,
 And yet are steep'd in favours; so am I,
 That have this golden chance, and know not why
 What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one!
 Be not, as is our fangled^a world, a garment
 Nobler than that it covers: let thy effects
 So follow, to be most unlike our courtiers,
 As good as promise.

[Reads] When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown,
 without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air;
 and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which,
 being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old
 stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries,
 Britain be fortunate, and flourish in peace and plenty.

^a *Fangled*. This word is very rarely used without the epithet
new; yet *fungle* means an innovation.

'T is still a dream ; or else such stuff as madmen
Tongue, and brain not : either both, or nothing :
Or senseless speaking, or a speaking such
As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,
The action of my life is like it, which
I 'll keep, if but for sympathy.

Enter Gaoler.

Gaol. Come, sir, are you ready for death ?

Post. Over-roasted rather : ready long ago.

Gaol. Hanging is the word, sir ; if you be ready for
that you are well cooked.

Post. So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators
the dish pays the shot.

Gaol. A heavy reckoning for you, sir : But the com-
fort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear
no more tavern bills ; which are often the sadness of
parting, as the procuring of mirth ; you come in faint
for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink ;
sorry that you have paid too much, and sorry that you
are paid too much ; purse and brain both empty ; the
brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light,
being drawn of heaviness : O ! of this contradiction you
shall now be quit.—O, the charity of a penny cord ! it
sums up thousands in a trice : you have no true debtor
and creditor but it ; of what 's past, is, and to come, the
discharge :—Your neck, sir, is pen, book, and counters ;
so the acquittance follows.

Post. I am merrier to die than thou art to live.

Gaol. Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the tooth-
ache : But a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a
hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change
places with his officer ; for, look you, sir, you know not
which way you shall go.

Post. Yes, indeed, do I, fellow

Gaol. Your death has eyes in 's head then ; I have
not seen him so pictured : you must either be directed

by some that take upon them to know ; or take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know ; for, jump the after-inquiry on your own peril, and how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you 'll never return to tell one.

Post. I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink, and will not use them.

Gaol. What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness ! I am sure hanging 's the way of winking.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Knock off his manacles ; bring your prisoner to the king.

Post. Thou bring'st good news ;—I am called to be made free.

Gaol. I 'll be hanged then.

Post. Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler ; no bolts for the dead. *[Exeunt Post. and Mess.]*

Gaol. Unless a man would marry a gallows, and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone.* Yet, on my conscience, there are verier knaves desire to live, for all he be a Roman : and there be some of them too that die against their wills : so should I, if I were one. I would we were all of one mind, and one mind good ; O, there were desolation of gaolers and gallowses ! I speak against my present profit ; but my wish hath a preferment in 't. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE V.—Cymbeline's Tent.

Enter CYMBELINE, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, Lords, Officers, and Attendants.

Cym. Stand by my side, you whom the gods have made

* *Prone*—forward.

Preservers of my throne. Woe is't that
 That the poor soldier that so richly fight,
 Whose rage should'stild anger, whose naked breast
 Stepp'd before targets of proof, cannot be found:
 He shall be happy that can find him, if
 Our grace can make him so.

Bel. I never saw
 Such noble fury in so poor a thing;
 Each precious drop he sent that pruned a thought
 But beggary and pain brought.

Cym. No tidings of him?
Pis. He hath been search'd among the dead and living.
 But no trace of him.

Cym. To my grief, I am
 The heir of his reward; which I will add
 To you the liver, heart, and brain of Britain,
 [To BELARIUS, GUIDERIO, and ARVIRAGUS.
 By whom I grant she lives:—'Tis now the time
 To ask of whence you are:—report it.

Bel. We
 In Cambria are we born, and gentle:
 Further to boast were neither true nor modest,
 Unless I add we are honest.

Cym. Bow your knees:
 Arise, my knights o' the battle; I create you
 Companions to our person, and will fit you
 With dignities becoming your estates.

Enter CORNELIUS and Ladies

There's business in these faces:—Why so sadly
 Greet you our victory? you look like Romans,
 And not o' the court of Britain.

Cor. Hail, great King!
 To sour your happiness, I must report
 The queen is dead.

Cym. Whom worse than a physician
 Would this report become? But I consider,

By medicine ~~long~~ ~~the~~ prolong'd, yet death
Will seize the doctor too.—How ended she?

Cor. With horror, madly dying, like her life,
Which, being cruel to the world, concluded
Most cruel to herself. What she confess'd
I will report, so please you: These her women
Can trip me, if I err; who, with wet cheeks,
Were present when she finish'd.

Cym. Prithee, say.

Cor. First, she confess'd she never lov'd you; only
Affected greatness got by you, not you:
Married your royalty, was wife to your place;
Abhor'd your person.

Cym. She alone knew this:
And, but she spoke it dying, I would not
Believe her lips in opening it. Proceed.

Cor. Your daughter, whom she bore in hand to love
With such integrity, she did confess
Was as a scorpion to her sight; whose life,
But that her flight prevented it, she had
Ta'en off by poison.

Cym. O most delicate feed!
Who is 't can read a woman?—Is there more?

Cor. More, sir, and worse. She did confess she had
For you a mortal mineral; which, being took,
Should by the minute feed on life, and, ling'ring,
By inches waste you: In which time she purpos'd,
By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to
O'ercome you with her show: yes, and in time,
When she had fitted you with her craft, to work
Her son into the adoption of the crown:
But, failing of her end by his strange absence,
Grew shameless-desperate; open'd, in despite
Of heaven and men, her purposes; repented
The evils she hatch'd were not effected: so,
Despairing, died.

Cym. Heard you all this, her women?

Lady. We did, so please your highness.

Cym. Mine eyes

Were not in fault, for she was beautiful ;
Mine ears, that heard her flattery ; nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming : it had been vicious
To have mistrusted her : yet, O my daughter !
That it was folly in me, thou mayst say,
And prove it in thy feeling. Heaven mend all !

*Enter LUCIUS, IACHIMO, the Soothsayer, and other
Roman prisoners, guarded ; POSTHUMUS behind,
and IMOGEN.*

Thou com'st not, Caius, now for tribute ; that
The Britons have raz'd out, though with the loss
Of many a bold one ; whose kinsmen have made suit
That their good souls may be appeas'd with slaughter
Of you their captives, which ourself have granted :
So, think of your estate.

Luc. Consider, sir, the chance of war : the day
Was yours by accident ; had it gone with us,
We should not, when the blood was cool, have threaten'd
Our prisoners with the sword. But since the gods
Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives
May be call'd ransom, let it come : sufficeth
A Roman with a Roman's heart can suffer :
Augustus lives to think on 't : and so much
For my peculiar care. This one thing only
I will entreat : my boy, a Briton born,
Let him be ransom'd : never master had
A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,
So tender over his occasions, true,
So feat, so nurse-like : let his virtue join
With my request, which, I'll make bold, your highness
Cannot deny ; he hath done no Briton harm,
Though he have serv'd a Roman : save him, sir,
And spare no blood beside.

Cym.

I have surely seen him :

His favour is familiar to me.

Boy, thou hast look'd thyself into my grace,
And art mine own.—I know not why, nor wherefore,
To say live, boy : ne'er thank thy master ; live :
And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt,
Fitting my bounty and thy state, I 'll give it ;
Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner,
The noblest ta'en.

Imo. I humbly thank your highness.

Luc. I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad ;
And yet I know thou wilt.

Imo. No, no : alack,
There 's other work in hand ; I see a thing
Bitter to me as death ; your life, good master,
Must shuffle for itself.

Luc. The boy disdains me,
He leaves me, scorns me : Briefly die their joys,
That place them on the truth of girls and boys.
Why stands he so perplex'd ?

Cym. What wouldst thou, boy ?
I love thee more and more ; think more and more
What 's best to ask. Know'st him thou look'st on ? speak,
Wilt have him live ? Is he thy kin ? thy friend ?

Imo. He is a Roman ; no more kin to me
Than I to your highness ; who, being born your vassal,
Am something ~~more~~.

Cym. Wherefore ey'st him so ?

Imo. I 'll tell you, sir, in private, if you please
To give me hearing.

Cym. Ay, with all my heart,
And lend my best attention. What 's thy name ?

Imo. Fidele, sir.

Cym. Thou art my good youth, my page ;
I 'll be thy master : Walk with me ; speak freely.

[CYMBELINE and IMOGEN converse apart.]

Bel. Is not this boy reviv'd from death ?

Arr. One sand another

Not more resembles that sweet rosy lad
Who died, and was Fidele :—What think you ?

Gui. The same dead thing alive.

Bel. Peace, peace ! see further ; he eyes us not ; forbear ;

Creatures may be alike : were 't he, I am sure
He would have spoke to us.

Gui. But we saw him dead.

Bel. Be silent ; let 's see further.

Pis. It is my mistress. [*Aside.*

Since she is living, let the time run on

To good, or bad. [*Cym. and Imo. come forward.*

Cym. Come, stand thou by our side ;

Make thy demand aloud.—Sir, [*to IACH.*] step you forth ;

Give answer to this boy, and do it freely ;

Or, by our greatness, and the grace of it,

Which is our honour, bitter torture shall

Winnow the truth from falsehood.—On, speak to him.

Imo. My boon is, that this gentleman may render
Of whom he had this ring.

Post. What 's that to him ? [*Aside.*

Cym. That diamond upon your finger, say
How came it yours ?

Iach. Thou 'lt torture me to leave unspoken that
Which, to be spoke, would torture thee.

Cym. How ! me ?

Iach. I am glad to be constrain'd to utter that
Which torments me to conceal.—By villainy

I got this ring ; 't was Leonatus' jewel :

Whom thou didst banish ; and (which more may grieve
thee

As it doth me) a nobler sir ne'er liv'd

'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou hear more, my lord ?

Cym. All that belongs to this.

Iach. That paragon, thy daughter,—

For whom my heart drops blood, and my false spirits
Quail to remember,—Give me leave ; I faint

Cym. My daughter! what of her? Renew thy strength :

I had rather thou shouldst live while nature will,
Than die ere I hear more : strive, man, and speak.

Iach. Upon a time, (unhappy was the clock
That struck the hour!) it was in Rome, (accurs'd
The mansion where!) 't was at a feast, (O 'would
Our viands had been poison'd! or, at least,
Those which I heav'd to head!) the good Posthumus,
(What should I say? he was too good, to be
Where ill men were; and was the best of all
Amongst the rar'st of good ones,) sitting sadly,
Hearing us praise our loves of Italy
For beauty that made barren the swell'd boast
Of him that best could speak; for feature, laming
The shrine of Venus, or straight-pight Minerva,
Postures beyond brief nature; for condition,
A shop of all the qualities that man
Loves woman for; besides, that hook of wiving,
Fairness, which strikes the eye :—

Cym. I stand on fire :

Come to the matter.

Iach. All too soon I shall,
Unless thou wouldst grieve quickly.—This Posthumus
(Most like a noble lord in love, and one
That had a royal lover) took this hint; ,
And, not dispraising whom we prais'd, (therein
He was as calm as virtue,) he began
His mistress' picture; which by his tongue being made,
And then a mind put in 't, either our brags
Were crack'd of kitchen trulls, or his description
Prov'd us unspeaking sots.

Cym. Nay, nay, to the purpose.

Iach. Your daughter's chastity—there it begins.
He spake of her, as Dian had hot dreams,
And she alone were cold : Whereat, I, wretch!
Made scruple of his praise; and wager'd with him
Pieces of gold, 'gainst this which then he wore

Upon his honour'd finger, to attain
 In suit the place of his bed, and win this ring
 By hers and mine adultery : he, true knight,
 No lesser of her honour confident
 Than I did truly find her, stakes this ring ;
 And would so, had it been a carbuncle
 Of Phoebus' wheel ; and might so safely, had it
 Been all the worth of his car. Away to Britain
 Post I in this design : Well may you, sir,
 Remember me at court, where I was taught
 Of your chaste daughter the wide difference
 'Twixt amorous and villainous. Being thus quenoh'd
 Of hope, not longing, mine Italian brain
 'Gan in your duller Britain operate
 Most vilely ; for my vantage, excellent ;
 And, to be brief, my practice so prevail'd
 That I return'd with simular proof enough
 To make the noble Leonatus mad,
 By wounding his belief in her renown
 With tokens thus, and thus ; averring notes
 Of chamber-hanging, pictures, this her bracelet,
 (O, cunning, how I got it !) nay, some marks
 Of secret on her person, that he could not
 But think her bond of chastity quite crack'd,
 I having ta'en the forfeit. Whereupon,—
 Methinks, I see him now,—

Post. Ay, so thou dost, [*Coming forward.*
 Italian fiend !—Ah me, most credulous fool,
 Egregious murderer, thief, any thing
 That 's due to all the villains past, in being,
 To come !—O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
 Some upright justicer !^a Thou, king, send out
 For torturers ingenious : it is I
 That all the abhorred things o' the earth amend,
 By being worse than they. I am Posthumus,
 That kill'd thy daughter :—villain-like, I lie ;

^a *Justicer.* This fine old word is used severa. times in 'Lear.'
 It is found in our ancient law-books.

That caus'd a lesser villain than myself,
 A sacrilegious thief, to do 't:—the temple
 Of virtue was she; yea, and she herself.
 Spit, and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
 The dogs o' the street to bay me: every villain
 Be call'd Posthumus Leonatus; and
 Be villainy less than 't was!—O Imogen!
 My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
 Imogen, Imogen!

Imo. Peace, my lord; hear, hear!—

Post. Shall 's have a play of this? Thou scorn'd page,
 There lie thy part. [*Striking her: she falls.*]

Pis. O, gentlemen, help
 Mine, and your mistress:—O, my lord Posthumus!
 You ne'er kill'd Imogen till now:—Help, help!—
 Mine honour'd lady!

Cym. Does the world go round?

Post. How come these staggers on me?

Pis. Wake, my mistress!

Cym. If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me
 To death with mortal joy.

Pis. How fares my mistress?

Imo. O, get thee from my sight;
 Thou gav'st me poison: dangerous fellow, hence!
 Breathe not where princes are!

Cym. The time of Imogen!

Pis. Lady,
 The gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if
 That box I gave you was not thought by me
 A precious thing; I had it from the queen.

Cym. New matter still?

Imo. It poison'd me.

Cor. O gods!—

I left out one thing which the queen confess'd,
 Which must approve ~~the~~ honest: if Pisanio
 Have, said she, given ~~the~~ mistress that confection
 Which I gave him for cordial, she is serv'd
 As I would serve a rat.

Cym. What 's this, Cornelius?

Cor. The queen, sir, very oft importun'd me
To temper poisons for her; still pretending
The satisfaction of her knowledge only
In killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs
Of no esteem: I, dreading that her purpose
Was of more danger, did compound for her
T certain stuff, which, being ta'en, would oust
Abe present power of life; but, in short time,
All offices of nature should again
Do their due functions.—Have you ta'en of it?

Imo. Most like I did, for I was dead.

Bel. My boys,
There was our error.

Gwi. This is sure, Fidele.

Imo. Why did you throw your wedded lady from
you?

Think that you are upon a rock, and now
Throw me again. [*Embracing him.*]

Post. Hang there like fruit, my soul,
Till the tree die!

Cym. How now, my flesh, my child?
What, mak'st thou me a dullard in this act?
Wilt thou not speak to me?

Imo. Your blessing, sir. [*Kneeling.*]

Bel. Though you did love this youth, I blame ye not;
You had a motive for it. *To Gwi. and Arv.*

Cym. My tears, that fall,
Prove holy water on thee! Imogen,
Thy mother 's dead.

Imo. I am sorry for 't, my lord.

Cym. O, she was naught; and long of her it was
That we meet here so strangely: But her son
Is gone, we know not how, nor where.

Pis. My lord,
Now fear is from me, I 'll speak troth. Lord Cloten,
Upon my lady's missing, came to me
With his sword drawn; foam'd at the mouth, and swore

If I discover'd not which way she was gone,
 It was my instant death : By accident,
 I had a feigned letter of my master's
 Thence in my pocket ; which directed him
 To seek her on the mountains near to Milford ;
 Where, in a frenzy, in my master's garments,
 Which he inforc'd from me, away he posts
 With unchaste purpose, and with oath to violate
 My lady's honour : what became of him,
 I further know not.

Gui. Let me end the story :

I slew him there.

Cym. Marry, the gods forefend !
 I would not thy good deeds should from my lips
 Pluck a hard sentence : prithee, valiant youth,
 Deny 't again.

Gui. I have spoke it, and I did it.

Cym. He was a prince.

Gui. A most incivil one : The wrongs he did me
 Were nothing prince-like ; for he did provoke me
 With language that would make me spurn the sea,
 If it could so roar to me : I cut off 's head ;
 And am right glad he is not standing here
 To tell this tale of mine.

Cym. I am sorry for thee.
 By thine own tongue thou art condemn'd, and must
 Endure our law : Thou art dead.

Imo. That headless man
 I thought had been my lord.

Cym. Bind the offender,
 And take him from our presence.

Bel. Stay, sir king :
 This man is better than the man he slew,
 As well as he as thyself ; and hath
 More of the merited, than a band of Clotens
 Had ever for. — Let his arms alone ; [To the guard.
 They were not born for bondage.

Cym. Why, old soldier,

Wilt thou undo the worth thou art unpaid for,
By tasting of our wrath? How of descent
As good as we?

Arv. In that he spake too far.

Cym. And thou shalt die for 't.

Bel. We will die all three!

But I will prove, that two of us are as good
As I have given out him.—My sons, I must,
For mine own part, unfold a dangerous speech,
Though, haply, well for you.

Arv. Your danger 's ours.

Gui. And our good his.

Bel. Have at it then.—

By leave;—Thou hadst, great king, a subject who
Was call'd Belarius.

Cym. What of him? he is
A banish'd traitor.

Bel. ~~He is~~ ^{He is} that hath
Assum'd this age: ^a indeed, a banish'd man;
I know not how a traitor.

Cym. Take him hence;
'The whole world shall not save him.

Bel. Not too hot:
First pay me for the nursing of thy sons;
And let it be confiscate all, so soon
As I have receiv'd it.

Cym. Nursing of my sons?

Bel. I am too blunt and saucy: Here 's my knee
Ere I arise I will prefer my sons;
Then, spare not the old father. Mighty sir,
These two young gentlemen, that call me ~~father~~,
And think they are my sons, are none of mine;
They are the issue of your loins, my liege,
And blood of your begetting.

Cym. How! my issue?

Bel. So sure as you your father's. I, old Morgan,

^a *Assum'd this age*—put on these appearances of age.

Am that Belarius whom you sometime banish'd :
 Your pleasure was my mere offence, my punishment
 I took, and all my treason : that I suffer'd
 Was all the harm I did. These gentle princes
 (For such and so they are) these twenty years
 Have I train'd up : those arts they have, as I
 Could put into them ; my breeding was, sir, as
 Your highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile,
 Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children
 Upon my banishment : I gave her to 't ;
 Having receiv'd the punishment before,
 For that which I did then : Beaten for loyalty,
 Excited me to treason : Their dear loss,
 The more of you 'twas felt, the more it shap'd
 Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir,
 Here are your sons again ; and I must lose
 Two of the sweet'st companions in the world :
 The benediction of these smiling heavens
 Fall on their heads like dew, for they are worthy
 To inlay heaven with stars.

Cym. Thou weep'st, and speak'st.
 The service, that you three have done, is more
 Valiant than this thou tell'st : I lost my children ;
 If these be they, I know not how to wish
 A pair of worthier sons.

Bel. Be pleas'd awhile.—
 This gentleman, whom I call Polydore,
 Most worthy prince, as yours, is true Guiderius :
 This gentleman, my Cadwal, Arviragus,
 Your father's princely son ; he, sir, was lapp'd
 In a precious mantle, wrought by the hand
 Of his mother, which, for more probation,
 I offer to your presence.

Cym. Guiderius had
 Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star ;
 It was a mark of wonder.

Bel. This is he ;
 Who hath upon him still that natural stamp :

It was wise Nature's end in the denatation;
To be his evidence now.

Cym. O, what am I
A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother
Rejoic'd deliverance more:—Bless'd may you be,
That, after this strange starting from your orbs,
You may reign in them now!—O Imogen,
Thou hast lost by this a kingdom.

Imo. No, my lord;
I have got two worlds by 't.—O my gentle brothers,
Have we thus met? O never say hereafter
But I am truest speaker: you call'd me brother,
When I was but your sister; I you brothers,
When you were so indeed.

Cym. Did you e'er meet?

Arv. Ay, my good lord.

Gui. And at first meeting lov'd;
Continued so, until we thought he died.

Cor. By the queen's dram she swallow'd.

Cym. O rare instinct!
When shall I hear all through? This fierce abridgment
Hath to it circumstantial branches, which
Distinction should be rich in.—Where, how liv'd you,
And when came you to serve our Roman captive?
How parted with your brothers? how first met them?
Why fled you from the court? and whither? These,
And your three motives to the battle, with
I know not how much more, should be demanded;
And all the other by-dependencies,
From chance to chance; but nor the time, nor place,
Will serve our long intergatories. See,
Posthumus anchors upon Imogen;
And she, like harmless lightning, throws her light
On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting
Each object with a joy; the counterchange
Is severally in all. Let's quit this ground,
And smoke the temple with our sacrifices.
Thou art my brother: So we'll hold thee ever. [To Her.]

Imo. You are my father too; and did relieve me
To see this gracious season.

Cym. All o'erjoy'd,
Save these in bonds; let them be joyful too,
For they shall taste our comfort.

Imo. My good master,
I will yet do you service.

Luc. Happy be you!

Cym. The forlorn soldier that so nobly fought,
He would have well becom'd this place, and grac'd
The thankings of a king.

Post. I am, sir,
The soldier that did company these three
In poor beseeching; 't was a fitment for
The purpose I then follow'd:—That I was he,
Speak, Iachimo; I had you down, and might
Have made you finish.

Iach. I am down again: [*Kneeling.*
But now my heavy conscience sinks my knee,
As then your force did. Take that life, 'beseech you,
Which I so often owe: but, your ring first;
And here the bracelet of the truest princess
That ever swore her faith.

Post. Kneel not to me;
The power that I have on you is to spare you;
The malice towards you to forgive you: Live,
And deal with others better.

Cym. Nobly doom'd;
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;
Pardon 's the word to all.

Arr. You help us, sir,
As you did mean indeed to be our brother;
Joy'd are we that you are.

Post. Your servant, princes.—Good my lord of Rome,
Call forth your soothsayer: As I slept, methought,
Great Jupiter, upon his eagle back,
Appear'd to me, with other spritely shows
Of mine own kindred: when I wak'd, I found

This label on my bosom ; whose containing^a
Is so from sense in hardness, that I can
Make no collection^a of it ; let him show
His skill in the construction.

Luc. Philarmonus !

Sooth. Hæve, my good lord.

Luc. Read, and declare the meaning.

Sooth. [*Reads.*] When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air ; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be joined to the old stock, and freshly grow ; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate, and flourish in peace and plenty.

Thou, Leonatus, art the lion's whelp ;
The fit and apt construction of thy name,
Being Leo-natus, doth import so much :
The piece of tender air, thy virtuous daughter,

[*To CYMBELINE.*]

Which we call *mollis aer* ; and *mollis aer*
We term it *mulier* : which *mulier* I divine
Is this most constant wife ; who, even now,
Answering the letter of the oracle,
Unknown to you, unsought, were clipp'd about
With this most tender air.

Cym. This hath some seeming.

Sooth. The lofty cedar, royal Cymbeline,
Personates thee : and thy lopp'd branches point
Thy two sons forth : who, by Belarius stolen,
For many years thought dead, are now reviv'd,
To the majestic cedar join'd ; whose issue
Promises Britain peace and plenty.

Cym. Well,

My peace we will begin :—And, Caius Lucius,
Although the victor, we submit to Cæsar,
And to the Roman empire ; promising
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which

^a *Collection*—consequence deduced from premises.

We were assailed by our wicked queen :
 Whom heav'n, in justice, (both on her, and here,)
 Hath laid most heavy hand.^a

Sooth. The fingers of the powers above do tune
 The harmony of this peace. The vision
 Which I made known to Lælius, ere the stroke
 Of this yet scarce-cold battle, at this instant
 Is full accomplish'd : For the Roman eagle,
 From south to west on wing soaring aloft,
 Lessen'd herself, and in the beams o' the sun
 So vanish'd : which foreshow'd our princely eagle,
 The imperial Caesar, should again unite
 His favour with the radiant Cymbeline,
 Which shines here in the west.

Cym. Land we the gods ;
 And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
 From our bless'd altars ! Publish we this peace
 To all our subjects. Set we forward : Let
 A Roman and a British ensign wave
 Friendly together : so through Lud's town march :
 And in the temple of great Jupiter
 Our peace we'll ratify ; seal it with feasts.
 Set on there :—Never was a war did cease,
 Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace.

[*Exeunt.*]

^a The particle *on* is understood. The same form of expression occurs in 'Othello'—

"What conjurations and what mighty magic
 I won his daughter [with]."



OTHELLO.



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

ON the 6th of October, 1621, Thomas Walkley entered at Stationers' Hall 'The Tragedie of Othello, the Moore of Venice.' In 1622 Walkley published the edition for which he had thus claimed the copy. It is, as was usual with the separate plays, a small quarto. It is by no means certain to our minds that Walkley's edition was published before the folio. The usual date of that edition is 1623; but there is a copy in existence bearing the date of 1622. We have, however, no doubt, that the copy of 'Othello' in the folio was printed from a manuscript copy, without reference to the quarto. The folio edition is regularly divided into acts and scenes; the quarto edition has not a single indication of any subdivision in the acts, and omits the division between Acts II. and III. The folio edition contains 163 lines which are not found in the quarto, and these some of the most striking in the play: the number of lines found in the quarto which are not in the folio do not amount to 10. The quarto, then, has not the merit of being the fuller copy. Believing the folio to be the more genuine copy, our text, for the most part, follows that authority.

When Shakspeare first became acquainted with the 'Moor of Venice' of Giraldi Cinthio (whether in the

original Italian, or the French translation, or in one of the little story-books that familiarized the people with the romance and the poetry of the south), he saw in that novel *the scaffolding* of 'Othello.' There was formerly in Venice a valiant Moor, says the story. It came to pass that a virtuous lady of wonderful beauty, named Desdemona, became enamoured of his great qualities and noble virtues. The Moor loved her in return, and they were married in spite of the opposition of the lady's friends. It happened too (says the story), that the senate of Venice appointed the Moor to the command of Cyprus, and that his lady determined to accompany him thither. Amongst the officers who attended upon the General was an ensign, of the most agreeable person, but of the most depraved nature. The wife of this man was the friend of Desdemona, and they spent much of their time together. The wicked ensign became violently enamoured of Desdemona; but she, whose thoughts were wholly engrossed by the Moor, was utterly regardless of the ensign's attentions. His love then became terrible hate, and he resolved to accuse Desdemona to her husband of infidelity, and to connect with the accusation a captain of Cyprus. That officer, having struck a centinel, was discharged from his command by the Moor; and Desdemona, interested in his favour, endeavoured to reinstate him in her husband's good opinion. The Moor said one day to the ensign, that his wife was so importunate for the restoration of the officer, that he must take him back. "If you would open your eyes, you would see plainer," said the ensign. The romance-

writer continues to display the perfidious intrigues of the ensign against Desdemona. He steals a handkerchief which the Moor had given her, employing the agency of his own child. He contrives with the Moor to murder the captain of Cyprus, after he has made the credulous husband listen to a conversation to which he gives a false colour and direction; and, finally, the Moor and the guilty officer destroy Desdemona together, under circumstances of great brutality. The crime is, however, concealed, and the Moor is finally betrayed by his accomplice.

Mr. Dunlop, in his 'History of Fiction,' has pointed out the material differences between the novel and the tragedy. He adds, "In all these important variations, Shakspeare has improved on his original. In a few other particulars he has deviated from it with less judgment; in most respects he has adhered with close imitation. The characters of Iago, Desdemona, and Cassio, are taken from Cinthio with scarcely a shade of difference. The obscure hints and various artifices of the villain to raise suspicion in the Moor are the same in the novel and the drama." M. Guizot, with the eye of real criticism, has seen somewhat further than Mr. Dunlop: "There was wanting in the narrative of Cinthio the poetical genius which furnished the actors—which created the individuals—which imposed upon each a figure and a character—which made us see their actions, and listen to their words—which presented their thoughts and penetrated their sentiments:—that vivifying power which summons events to arise, to progress, to expand,

to be completed :—that creative breath which, breathing over the past, calls it again into being, and fills it with a present and imperishable life :—this was the power which Shakspeare alone possessed, and by which, out of a forgotten novel, he has made ‘Othello.’ ”

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE OF VENICE.

Appears, Act I. sc. 3.

BRABANTIO, *a senator ; father to Desdemona.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3.

Two other Senators.

Appear, Act I. sc. 3.

GRATIANO, *brother to Brabantio.*

Appears, Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2.

LODOVICO, *kinsman to Brabantio.*

Appears, Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2.

OTHELLO, *the Moor.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 2 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 2 ;
sc. 3 ; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2.

CASSIO, *lieutenant to Othello.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 1 ; sc. 3 ;
sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 1 ; sc. 2.

IAGO, *ancient to Othello.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act III.
sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1 ;
sc. 2.

RODERIGO, *a Venetian gentleman.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 1 ; sc. 2 ; sc. 3. Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3.
Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1.

MONTANO, *Othello's predecessor in the government of
Cyprus.*

Appears, Act II. sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 2.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Clown, *servant to Othello.*

Appears, Act III. sc. 1 ; sc. 4.

Herald.

Appears, Act II. sc. 2.

DESDEMONA, *wife to Othello.*

*Appears, Act I sc. 3. Act II sc. 1 ; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 3 ; sc. 4.
Act IV. sc. 1 ; sc 2 ; sc. 3. Act V. sc. 2.*

EMILIA, *wife to Iago.*

*Appears, Act II. sc. 1. Act III sc 1 ; sc. 3 ; sc. 4. Act IV.
sc. 2, sc 3 Act V. sc. 1, sc. 2*

BIANCA, *a courtesan.*

Appears, Act III. sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 1. Act V. sc. 1.

SCENE,—FOR THE FIRST ACT, IN VENICE;
DURING THE REST OF THE PLAY, AT A SEA-
PORT IN CYPRUS.

O T H E L L O.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Venice. *A Street.**Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.*

Rod. Never tell me, I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.

Iago. But you 'll not hear me. If ever I did dream
Of such a matter, ah! nor me.

Rod. Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in thy
hate.

Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of
the city,

In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him : and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place :
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them ; with a bombast circumstance,
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war,
Nonsuits my mediators. For, certes, says he,
I have already chose my officer.^a

^a *Circumstance* is circumlocution. Iago does not mean to say that Othello made a long rigmarole speech to the three great ones, and then nonsuited the mediators by telling them he had already chosen his officer ; but, in the spirit of calumny, he imputes to Othello that, having chosen his officer before the personal suit was made to him for Iago, he suppressed the fact ; evaded the mediators ; and nonsuited them with a bombast circumstance.

And what was he ?
 Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
 One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
 A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife,
 That never set a squadron in the field,
 Nor the division of a battle knows
 More than a spinster; unless the bookish theorick,
 Wherein the tongued consuls can propose
 As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
 Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election :
 And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof
 At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds
 Christen'd and heathen,—must be be-lee'd and calm'd^a
 By debtor and creditor: this counter-caster,
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
 And I,—bless the mark! his Moor-ship's ancient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his hang-
 man.

Iago. Why, there's no remedy, 't is the curse of
 service;

Preferment goes by letter and affection,
 And not by old gradation, where each second
 Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
 Whether I in any just term am affin'd
 To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O sir, content you;
 I follow him to serve my turn upon him :
 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
 Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
 Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
 That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
 Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
 For nought but provender; and when he's old,
 cashier'd;

^a *Be-lee'd and calm'd.* Iago uses terms of navigation to express that Cassio had out-sailed him.

Whip me such honest knaves : Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves ;
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lin'd
their coats,

Do themselves homage : these fellows have some soul ;
And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor I would not be Iago.
In following him I follow but myself ;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeing so, for my peculiar end :
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In complement extern,^a 't is not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at : I am not what I am.

Rod. What a fall Fortune does the Thick-lips owe,
If he can carry 't thus !

Iago. Call up her father,
Rouse him : make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets ; incense her kinsmen,
And though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies : though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such chances of vexation on 't,
As it may lose some colour.

Rod. Here is her father's house ; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do ; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,
As when (by night and negligence) the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

^a *In complement extern.* Johnson interprets this—"In that which I do only for an outward show of civility." Surely this interpretation, by adopting the secondary meaning of *complement* (compliment), destroys Iago's bold avowal, which is, that when his actions exhibit the real intentions and motives of his heart, in *outward completeness*, he might as well wear it upon his sleeve.

Rod. What, ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio,
ho!

Iago. Awake; what, ho! Brabantio! thieves!
thieves!

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

BRABANTIO, *above.*

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why, wherefore ask you this?

Iago. Sir, you are robb'd; for shame^a put on your
gown;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;

Even now, now, very now, an old black ram

Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:

Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

Bra. Not I; what are you?

Rod. My name is Roderigo.

Bra. The wouser welcome:

I have charg'd thee not to haunt about my doors:

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say

My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,

(Being full of supper and distempering draughts,)

Upon malicious knavery, dost thou come

To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, sir, sir,—

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,

^a For shame. This is not used as a reproach, but means—for decency put on your gown.

My spirit and my place have in their power
To make this bitter to thee.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice;

My house is not a grange.^a

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago Sir, you are one of those that will not serve
God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you
service, and you think we are ruffians, you'll have your
daughter covered with a Barbary horse: you'll have
your nephews^b neigh to you: you'll have coursers for
cousins, and gennets for germans.

Bra. What profane wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your
daughter and the Moor are making the beast with two
backs.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer. I know thee, Roderigo

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech
you,

If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
(As partly I find it is,) that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor:
If this be known to you, and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe

^a *Grange.* Strictly speaking, the farm house of a monastery.
But it is used by the old writers as a separate dwelling.

^b *Nephews.* The word was formerly used to signify a grandson, or any lineal descendant.

That, from the sense of all civility,
 I thus would play and trifle with your reverence :
 Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—
 I say again, hath made a gross revolt ;
 Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
 In an extravagant ^a and wheeling stranger,
 Of here and every where : Straight satisfy yourself :
 If she be in her chamber, or your house,
 Let loose on me the justice of the state
 For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho !
 Give me a taper ; call up all my people :
 This accident is not unlike my dream ;
 Belief of it oppresses me already :
 Light, I say ! light ! *[Exit from above.]*

Iago. Farewell ; for I must leave you :
 It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
 To be produc'd (as, if I stay, I shall)
 Against the Moor ; For, I do know, the state,
 (However this may gall him with some check,)
 Cannot with safety cast him. For he's embark'd
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus' wars,
 (Which even now stand in act,) that for their souls,
 Another of his fathom they have none
 To lead their business : in which regard,
 Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
 Yet, for necessity of present life,
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find
 him,
 Lead to the Sagittary^b the raised search ;
 And there will I be with him. So, farewell. *[Exit.]*

^a *Extravagant*—wandering, unsettled.

^b *The Sagittary.* This is generally taken to be an inn. It was the residence at the arsenal of the commanding officers of the navy and army of the republic. The figure of an archer, with his drawn bow, over the gates, still indicates the place.

Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with torches.

Bra. It is too true an evil : gone she is,
And what 's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her?—O, unhappy girl!—
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a father?—
How didst thou know 't was she?—O, she deceives me
Past thought!—What said she to you?—Get more
tapers ;

Raise all my kindred.—Are they married, think you?

Rod. Truly, I think they are.

Bra. O heaven!—How got she out?—O treason of
the blood!—

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act.—Are there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abus'd? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

Rod. Yes, sir ; I have indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother.—O, would you had had
her!—

Some one way, some another.—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

Rod. I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I 'll call ;
I may command at most ;—Get weapons, ho !
And raise some special officers of night.—
On, good Roderigo. I will deserve your pains. [*Ex.*

SCENE II.—*The same. Another Street.*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants with torches.

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff^a o' the conscience,

^a *Stuff*—matter, material. The stuff of the conscience is the
very substance of the conscience.

To do no contriv'd murder : I lack iniquity
 Sometime to do me service : Nine or ten times
 I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

Oth. 'T is better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated,
 And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
 Against your honour,
 That, with the little godliness I have,
 I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
 Are you fast married? Be assur'd of this,
 That the magnifico is much belov'd,
 And hath, in his effect, a voice potential,
 As double as the duke's : he will divorce you ;
 Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
 The law (with all his might to enforce it on)
 Will give him cable.

Oth. Let him do his spite :
 My services, which I have done the signiory,
 Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'T is yet to know,
 (Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
 I shall promulgate,) I fetch my life and being
 From men of royal siege;^a and my demerits
 May speak, unbonneted,^b to as proud a fortune
 As this that I have reach'd : For know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my unhoused^c free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine

^a *Siege.* A *siège* royal was a throne, an elevated seat.

^b *Unbonneted.* Theobald says, to speak unbonneted is to speak with the cap off, which is directly opposed to the poet's meaning. Mr. Fuseli suggested an ingenious explanation, that as at Venice the cap or bonnet constituted an important distinction, so the demerits of Othello might speak for themselves without any extrinsic honours. *Demerits* is used in the sense of *merits*; *mereo* and *demereo* being synonymous in Latin.

^c Johnson explains *unhoused*—free from domestic cares. It appears to us that Othello simply uses *unhoused* for *unmarried*. The *husband* is the head or *band* of the *house*—the unmarried is the *unhouse-banded*—the *unhoused*.

For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come
youd?

*Enter CASSIO, at a distance, and certain Officers with
torches.*

Iago. Those are the raised father and his friends :
You were best go in

Oth. Not I : I must be found ;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they ?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Oth. The servants of the duke ; and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends !
What is the news ?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general ;
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you ?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine :
It is a business of some heat. The galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night, at one another's heels ;
And many of the consuls,^a rais'd and met,
Are at the duke's already : You have been hotly call'd
for ;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests,
To search you out.

Oth. 'T is well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Exit.*

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here ?

Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack ;^b
If it prove lawful prize he 's made for ever.

^a *Consuls.* In the first scene we have "the toughened consuls ;"
doubtless the senators are meant in both passages.

^b *Carack.* A vessel of heavy burden.

Cas. I do not understand.

Iago. He 's married.

Cas. To who ?

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go ?

Oth. Have with you.

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers with torches.

Iago. It is Brabantio :—general, be advis'd ;
He comes to bad intent.

Oth. Hola ! stand there !

Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief !
[*They draw on both sides.*]

Iago. You, Roderigo ! Come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.

Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter ?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her :

For I 'll refer me to all things of sense,

(If she in chains of magic were not bound,)

Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,

So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd

The wealthy curled dearling^a of our nation,

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,

Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom

Of such a thing as thou,—to fear,^b not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 't is not gross in sense,

That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms ;

^a *Dearest*, the old Saxon word in a plural sense.

^b *To fear*. Brabantio calls Othello a thing to terrify, not to delight.

Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
That weaken motion :—I 'll have it disputed on ;
'T is probable, and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant :
Lay hold upon him ; if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge ?

Br. To prison ; till fit time
Of law, and course of direct session,
Call thee to answer.

Oth. What if I do obey ?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied ;
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state,
To bring me to him ?

Off. 'T is true, most worthy signior,
The duke 's in council ; and your noble self,
I am sure is sent for.

Br. How ! the duke in council ?
In this time of the night ?—Bring him away :
Mine 's not an idle cause : the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 't were their own :
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be. [*Ex.*

SCENE III.—*The same. A Council Chamber.*

The DUKE, and Senators, sitting ; Officers attending.

Duke. There is no composition in these news,
That gives them credit.

1 *Sen.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd ;
My letters say, a hundred and seven galleys.

Duke. And mine, a hundred forty.

2 *Sen.* And mine, two hundred .
But though they jump not on a just account,
(As in these cases where the aim reports,^a

'T is oft with difference,) yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment :
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sailor. [*Within.*] What' ho ! what' ho ! what' ho !

Enter Sailor.

Off. A messenger from the galleys.

Duke. Now ? the business ?

Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes ;
So was I bid report here to the state,
By signior Angelo.

Duke. How say you by this change ?

1 *Sen.* This cannot be,
By no assay of reason ; 't is a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze : When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk ;
And let ourselves again but understand
That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in : if we make thought of this,
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful,
To leave that latest which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.

^a *The aim reports* Aim is used in the sense of *conjecture*.

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he 's not for Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.,

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there enjoined them with an after fleet.

1 Sen. Ay, so I thought :—How many, as you guess ?

Mess. Of thirty sail : and now they do re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with flank appearance
Their purposes towards Cyprus. Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty, recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.

Duke. 'T is certain then for Cyprus.
Marcus Luccicos,^a is not he in town ?

1 Sen. He 's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us to him, post—post-haste,
despatch.

1 Sen. Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODERIGO, and
Officers.*

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.

I did not see you ; welcome, gentle signior. [*To BRA.*
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra. So did I yours : Good your grace, pardon me ;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,

^a *Marcus Luccicos.* Both the folio and the quarto give this proper name thus. Capell changed it to *Marcus Lucchesi*, saying that such a termination as *Luccicos* is unknown in the Italian. But who is the duke inquiring after ? Most probably a Greek soldier of Cyprus—an Estradiot—one who from his local knowledge was enabled to give him information. Is it necessary that the Greek should bear an Italian name ? And does not the termination in *cos* better convey the notion which we believe the poet to have had ?

Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general
care

Take hold on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature,
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

Duke. Why, what 's the matter?

Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!

Sen.

Dead?

Bra.

Ay, to me;

She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks:
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not—

Duke. Whoe'er he be, that in this foul proceeding
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
Hath hither brought.

All.

We are very sorry for 't.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to this?

[To OTHELLO.]

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,—
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her;
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,

Till now some nine moons wasted,* they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broils and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking for myself: Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love: what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
I won his daughter.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself: And she, in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,
That will confess, perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this is no proof;
Without more wider and more overt test,
Than these thin habits, and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming, do prefer against him.

1 Sen. But, Othello, speak:
Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father:

* He had been unemployed during nine months.

If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office, I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them: you best know the
place. [*Exeunt IAGO and Attendants.*]

And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortune,
That I have pass'd.
I run it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bad me tell it.
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances;
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance. In my traveller's history,^a
(Wherein of antres vast and desarts idle,^b
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch
heaven,
It was my hint to speak,) such was my process;—
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline;
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;

^a *Traveller's history.* Othello modestly, and somewhat jocosely, calls his wonderful relations, a *traveller's history*.

^b *Idle*—sterile, barren.

Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse : Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intently : I did consent ;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :
She swore,—In faith, 't was strange, 't was passing
strange ;

'T was pitiful, 't was wondrous pitiful :
She wish'd she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man : she than'
me ;

And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake :
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd ;
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd ;
Here comes the lady, let her witness it.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.

Duke. I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best :
Men do their broken weapons rather use,
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak ;
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head if my bad blame
Light on the man !—Come hither, gentle mistress ;
Do you perceive in all this noble company

Where most you owe obedience ?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty :
To you, I am bound for life and education ;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty ;—
I am hitherto your daughter : But here 's my husband ;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. God be with you !—I have done :—
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs ;
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.
Come hither, Moor :

I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself ; and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise, or step, may help these lovers.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief ;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile ;
We lose it not so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears :
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.

These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal :
But words are words ; I never yet did hear
That the bruise'd heart was pierced through the ear.
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation
makes for Cyprus :—Othello, the fortitude of the place
is best known to you : And though we have there a
substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a
more sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer
voice on you : you must therefore be content to slubber
the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn
and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down : I do agnize^a
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness ; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife ;
Due reference of place, and exhibition ;
With such accommodation, and besort,
As levels with her breeding.

Duke. Why ; at her father's.

Bra. I will not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear ;
And let me find a charter in your voice
To assist my simpleness.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona ?

Des. That I love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes

^a *Agnize*—confess, acknowledge.

May trumpet to the world : my heart 's subdued
Even to the very quality of my lord :
I saw Othello's visage in his mind ;
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rights for why I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence : Let me go with him.

Oth. Let her have your voice.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not,
To please the palate of my appetite;
Nor to comply with heat the young affects,
In my defunct and proper satisfaction ;^a
But to be free and bounteous to her mind :
And heaven defend your good souls that you think
I will your serious and great business scant,
When she is with me : No, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dulness
My speculative and offic'd instrument,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation

Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going ; the affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.

Sen. You must away to-night.

Oth.

With all my heart.

Duke. At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,

^a We print this passage (which Steevens says will prove a lasting source of doubt and controversy) as we find it. We would only observe, that *comply* may be used in the sense of *supply*, that *affects* are *affections*, and that *defunct* does not necessarily mean dead.

And he shall our commission bring to you ;
And such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.

Oth. So please your grace, my ancient ;
A man he is of honesty and trust :
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so.
Good night to every one. — And, noble signior, [*To BRA.*
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

I Sen. Adieu, brave Moor ! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see ;
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt DUKE, Senators, Officers, &c.*

Oth. My life upon her faith ! Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee ;
I prithee let thy wife attend on her ;
And bring them after in the best advantage.
Come, Desdemona, I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matter and direction,
To spend with thee : we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.*

Rod. Iago.

Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart ?

Rod. What will I do, think'st thou ?

Iago. Why, go to bed and sleep.

Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.

Iago. If thou dost I shall never love thee after.
Why, thou silly gentleman !

Rod. It is silliness to live when to live is torment :
and then have we a prescription to die when death is
our physician.

Iago. O villainous ! I have looked upon the world for
four times seven years ; and since I could distinguish
betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found man that

knew how to love himself. Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig! 't is in ourselves that we are thus, or thus. Our bodies are our gardens; to the which our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it steril with idleness, or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: But we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you call love, to be a sect^a or scion.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood, and a permission of the will. Come, be a man: Drown thyself? drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness. I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favour^b with an usurped beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be long that Desdemona should continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse;—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration; put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills;—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter

^a *A sect.* What we now call in horticulture a *cutting*.

^b *Defeat thy favour*—change thy countenance.

as colouintida. She must change for youth : when she is sated with his body she will find the errors of her choice. Therefore put money in thy purse.—If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst : If sanctimony and a frail vow, betwixt an *erring*^a barbarian and super-subtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her ; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself ! it is clean out of the way : seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy, than to be drowned and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue ?

Iago. Thou art sure of me ;—Go, make money : I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor : My cause is hearted ; thine hath no less reason : Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him : if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered. Traverse ; go ; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i' the morning ?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I 'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to ; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo ?

Rod. What say you ?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am changed. I 'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to ; farewell ! put money enough in your purse.

[Exit RODERIGO.]

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse :

For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe,

^a *Erring*—used in the same sense as *extravagant*, in a previous scene.

But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not if 't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do, as if for surety. He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man: Let me see now;
To get his place, and to plume up my will;
In double knavery,—How? how?—Let's see:—
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
That he is too familiar with his wife:
He hath a person, and a smooth dispose,
To be suspected; fram'd to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose,
As asses are.
I have 't;—it is engender'd:—Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.
[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Sea-port Town in Cyprus.**Enter MONTANO and Two Gentlemen.**Mon.* What from the cape can you discern at sea?*1 Gent.* Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.*Mon.* Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? ^a what shall we hear of this?*2 Gent.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous mane,^b^a *Mortise.* The hole of one piece of timber fitted to receive the tenon of another.^b *Mane.* In the folio this word is spelt *maine*; in the quarto *mayne*. In each the spelling of *main* in the third line of this scene is the same. But we have ventured to reject this consistency of orthography, and for the first time to print the word *mane*. For what is "high and monstrous *main*?" We use the word *main* elliptically, for the main sea, the great sea, as Shakspeare uses it in the passage " 'twixt the heaven and the main." The main is the *ocean*. Substitute that word, and what can we make of the passage before us?—"The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous *ocean*." But adopt the word *mane*, and it appears to us that we have as fine an image as any in Shakspeare. In the *high and monstrous mane* we have a picture which was probably suggested by the noble passage in Job: "Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?" The horse of Job is the war-horse, "who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;" and when Shakspeare pictured to himself his *mane* wildly streaming, "when the

Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole :
I never did like molestation view
On th' enchafed flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd ;
It is impossible to bear it out.

Enter a Third Gentleman.

3 Gent. News, lads ! our wars are done :
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,
That their designment halts : A noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wrack^a and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

Mon. How ! is this true ?

3 Gent. The ship is here put in,
A Veronessa : Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore : the Moor himself 's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on 't ; 't is a worthy governor.

3 Gent. But this same Cassio,—though he speak of
comfort,
Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe ; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.

Mon. 'Pray heaven he be :
For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let 's to the sea-side,—hoa !

quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield," he saw an image of the fury of "the wind-shak'd surge," and of its very form ; and he painted it "with high and monstrous mane"

^a *Wrack.* Mr. Hunter has with great propriety suggested the restoration of the old word *wrack* to Shakspeare's text, instead of *wreck*. He observes that we still use the familiar phrase "wreck and ruin."

As well to see the vessel that 's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello;
Even till we make the main, and the aerial blue,
An indistinct regard.

3 *Gent.* Come, let 's do so.
Nor every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivancy.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks, you the valiant of the warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor! O, let the heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea!

Mm. Is he well shipp'd?

Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.

[*Within.*] A sail, a sail, a sail!

Enter another Gentleman.

Cas. What noise?

4 *Gent.* The town is empty; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry—a sail.

Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governor.

2 *Gent.* They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
[*Guns heard.*]

Our friends, at least.

Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 't is that is arriv'd.

2 *Gent.* I shall.

[*Exit.*]

Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd?

Cas. Most fortunately: he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragon's description and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,

And in ~~the~~ essential vesture of creation
Does tire the ingener.^a—How now? who has put in?

Re-enter Second Gentleman.

2 *Gent.* 'T is one Iago, ancient to the general.

Cas. He has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,
Traitors ensteep'd to enclog the guiltless keel,
As having sense of beauty do omit
Their mortal^b natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mon. What is she?

Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,
A se'nnight's speed.—Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath;
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort!—O, behold,

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO,
and Attendants.*

The riches of the ship is^c come on shore!
You men of Cyprus, let her have your knees:

^a The text presents no difficulty when we understand the word *ingener*. The word *engine* is so called "because not made without great effort (*ingenit*) of genius, of ingenuity, of contrivance." The *ingener*, then, is the contriver by ingenuity—the designer—and here applied to a poet is almost literally the Greek Ποιητής—maker. Daniell uses the word *ingeniate* in the sense of *to contrive*; Ben Jonson, *ingine* for understanding.

^b *Mortal*—deadly.

^c *Riches* is used as a singular noun in the 87th Sonnet—

"And for *that riches* where is my deserving."

Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arriv'd; nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear—How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship: But hark! a sail.

[*Cry within, A sail! a sail! Then guns heard.*

2 Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel;
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news.—

[*Exit Gentleman.*

Good ancient, you are welcome;—Welcome, mis-
tress:—

[*To EMILIA.*

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 't is my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

[*Kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much;
I find it still when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on: you are pictures out of
door;

Bells in your parlours; wild cats in your kitchens;
Saints in your injuries; devils being offended;
Players in your huswifery; and huswives in your beds.

Des. O, fye upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk ;
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst write of me if thou shouldst
praise me ?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to 't ;
For I am nothing if not critical.

Des. Come on, assay :—There's one gone to the
harbour ?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry ; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.
Come, how wouldst thou praise me ?

Iago. I am about it ; but, indeed, my invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize,—
It plucks out brains and all : But my muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.

If she be fair and wise,—fairness, and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well prais'd ! How if she be black and witty ?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How, if fair and foolish ?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair :
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes, to make fools
laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou
for her that's foul and foolish ?

Iago. There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance !—thou praisest the worst
best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a de-
serving woman indeed ? one, that, in the authority of
her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice
itself ?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud ;
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud ;
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay ;
Fled from her wish, and yet said,—now I may ;
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly ;
She that in wisdom never was so frail,
To change the col's head for the salmon's tail ;^a
She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind,
See suitors following, and not look behind ;
She was a wight, if ever such wights were,

Des. To do what ?

Iago. To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion !—Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband.—How say you, Cassio ? is he not a most profane and liberal^b counsellor ?

Cas. He speaks home, madam ; you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm : Ay, well said, whisper : with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do ; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship.^c You say true ; 't is so, indeed : if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good ! well kissed, and excellent courtesy ! 't is so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips ? would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake !—[*Trumpet.*] The Moor, I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'T is truly so.

^a "To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail" is to exchange the more delicate fare for the coarser. In the household-book of Queen Elizabeth it is directed that "the master-cooks shall have to fee all the salmon's tails."

^b *Liberal*—licentious.

^c *Courtship* is used for paying courtesies, as in 'Richard II.'—

"Observ'd his *courtship* to the common people."

Des. Let 's meet him, and receive him.

Cas. Lo, where he comes !

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior!^a

Des. My dear Othello !

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy !
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death !
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high ; and duck again as low
As hell 's from heaven ! If it were now to die,
'T were now to be most happy ; for, I fear
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The heavens forbid
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow !

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers !—
I cannot speak enough of this content,
It stops me here ; it is too much of joy ;
And this, and this, the greatest discords be

[*Kissing her.*
That e'er our hearts shall make !

Iago. O, you are well tun'd now !
But I 'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am. [*Aside.*

^a The term *warrior* applied to a lady is somewhat startling. In the third act Desdemona says of herself, " Unhandsome warrior that I am." Stevens says that it was a term of endearment which we derive from the old French poets, and that Ronsard, in his sonnets, frequently calls the ladies *guerrières*. But we cannot avoid thinking that Othello playfully salutes his wife as a warrior, in compliment to her resolution not to—

—————" be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war."

Oth. Come; let us to the castle.—
News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.
How does my old acquaintance of this isle?
Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus,
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comforts.—I prithee, good Iago,
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt* OTH., DES., and Attend.]

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour.
Come thither. If thou be'st valiant, (as they say, base
men being in love have then a nobility in their natures
more than is native to them,) list me. The lieutenant
to-night watches on the court of guard:—First, I must
tell thee this—Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 't is not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger—thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies: To love him still for prating, let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour; sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in: Now, for want of these required conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant and unforced position,) who stands so eminent in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does:—a knave

very voluble; no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: A slipper and subtle knave; a finder of occasions; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself: A devilish knave! besides, the knave is handsome, young; and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after: A pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she is full of most bless'd condition.

Iago. Bless'd fig's end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been bless'd, she would never have loved the Moor: Bless'd pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embrac'd together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! When these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion: Pish!—But, sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night, for the command, I'll lay 't upon you: Cassio ~~knows~~ you not;—I'll not be far from you: Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline, or from what other ~~course~~ you please, which the time shall more favourably ~~minister~~.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he's rash, and very sudden in choler; and, haply, may strike at you: Provoke him that he may: for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true

taste again, but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if you can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel. I must fetch his necessities ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu. [Exit.]

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;
That she loves him, 't is apt, and of great credit:
The Moor—howbeit that I endure him not,—
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature;
And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband. Now I do love her too;
Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure,
I stand accountant for as great a sin,)
But partly led to diet my revenge,
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;
And nothing can or shall content my soul,
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife;
Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,—
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace^a
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;
Abuse him to the Moor in the right garb,—
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too;
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,

^a The noun *trash* and the verb *trace*, are used with perfect propriety. The *trash* is the thing *traced*, put in *traces*—confined—as an untrained worthless dog is held, and hence the present meaning of *trash*.

For making him egregiously an ass,
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. 'T is here, but yet confus'd ;
Knavery's plain face is never seen till us'd. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter a Herald, with a proclamation ; People following.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere^a perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph : some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him ; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial : So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open ; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general, Othello ! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and Attendants.

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night :
Let 's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to out-sport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to 't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night : To-morrow, with your earliest,
Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue ; [To DES.
That profit 's yet to come 'tween me and you.—
Good night. [Exeunt OTH., DES., and Attend.

^a Mere—entire.

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Welcome, Iago : We must to the watch.

Iago Not this hour, lieutenant ; 't is not yet ten o' th' clock : Our general cast us thus early for the love of his Desdemona, whom let us not therefore blame : he hath not yet made wanton the night with her ; and she is sport for Jove.

Cas. She 's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And I 'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has ! methinks it sounds a jangle to provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye ; and yet methinks right modest.

Iago. And when she speaks is it not an alarum to love ?

Cas. She is, indeed, perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets ! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine : and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago ; I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking : I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends ; but one cup ; I 'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too,—and, behold, what innovation it makes here : I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man ! 't is a night of revels ; the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they ?

Iago. Here at the door ; I pray you call them in.

Cas. I 'll do 't ; but it dislikes me. [*Exit CAS.*]

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
 With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
 He 'll be as full of quarrel and offence,
 As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool, Ro-
 derigo,

Whom love has turn'd almost the wrong side out,
 To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
 Potations pottle deep; and he 's to watch:
 Three else of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits,
 That hold their honours in a wary distance,
 The very elements of this warlike isle,—
 Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
 And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunk-
 ards,

Am I to put our Cassio in some action
 That may offend the isle :—But here they come :
 If consequence do but approve my dream,
 My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Re-enter CASSIO, with him MONTANO, and Gentlemen.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, they have given me a taste
 already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I
 am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

And let me the canakin clink, clink, [Sings.
 And let me the canakin clink.

A soldier's a man; O man's life 's but a span;
 Why then let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys! [Wine brought in.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learned it in England, where indeed they
 are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German,
 and your swag-bellied Hollander,—Drink, ho!—are
 nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so exquisite in his drink-
 ing?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled.

Cas. To the health of our general.

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I 'll do you justice.

Iago. O sweet England!

King Stephen was a worthy peer,
His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them sixpence all too dear,
With that he call'd the tailor lown.

He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree;
'T is pride that pulls the country down,
And take thy auld cloak about thee.

Some wine, ho!

Cas. Why this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear it again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things.—Well,—Heaven 's above all; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It 's true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part,—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let 's have no more of this: let 's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let 's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk: this is my ancient; this is my right hand, and this is my left:—I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and I speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well then : you must not think then that I am drunk. [Exit.

Mon. To the platform, masters ; come, let 's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow that is gone before ;—
He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction : and do but see his vice ;
'T is to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other : 't is pity of him.
I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus ?

Iago. 'T is evermore his prologue to his sleep :
He 'll watch the horologe a double set,^a
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not ; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils. Is not this true ?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. How, now, Roderigo ? [Aside.
I pray you, after the lieutenant ; go. [Ex. ROD.

Mon. And 't is great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an ingraft infirmity :
It were an honest action, to say so
To the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island :
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But hark ! what noise ?

^a Shakspeare here adopts the English division of time, in which the day is divided into two portions of twelve hours each, "the double set" of the horologe.

Enter CASSIO, pursuing RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!

Mon. What 's the matter, lieutenant?

Cas. A knave!—teach me my duty!

I 'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.^a

Rod. Beat me!

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue? [*Striking Rod.*]

Mon. Nay, good lieutenant;

I pray you, sir, hold your hand. [*Staying him.*]

Cas. Let me go, sir,

Or I 'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon. Come, come, you 're drunk.

Cas. Drunk! [*They fight.*]

Iago. Away, I say! go out, and cry—a mutiny.

[*Aside to Rod., who goes out.*]

Nay, good lieutenant,—alas, gentlemen,—

Help, ho!—Lieutenant, sir Montano,—

Help, masters!—Here 's a goodly watch, indeed!

[*Bell rings.*]

Who 's that which rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!

The town will rise: Fie, fie, lieutenant! hold;

You 'll be asham'd for ever.

Enter OTHELLO, and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mon. I bleed still; I am hurt to the death.—He dies—

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, ho! Lieutenant,—sir Montano,—gentlemen,—

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?

Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, for shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?

Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that

Which heaven bath forbid the Ottomites?

^a *Twiggen bottle—a winker bottle.*

For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl :
 He that stirs next to carve for his own rage,
 Holds his soul light ; he dies upon his motion.
 Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle
 From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters ?—
 Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
 Speak, who began this ? on thy love I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know :—friends all but now, even
 now,

In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
 Devesting them for bed : and then, but now,
 (As if some planet had unwitting men,)
 Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast
 In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
 Any beginning to this peevish odds ;
 And 'would in action glorious I had lost
 Those legs that brought me to a part of it !

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot ?

Cas. I pray you, pardon me, I cannot speak.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont to be civil ;
 The gravity and stillness of your youth
 The world hath noted, and your name is great
 In mouths of wisest censure : What 's the matter
 That you unlace your reputation thus,
 And spend your rich opinion, for the name
 Of a night-brawler ? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger ;
 Your officer, Iago, can inform you—
 While I spare speech, which something now offends
 me,—

Of all that I do know : nor know I aught
 By me that 's said or done amiss this night ;
 Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,
 And to defend ourselves it be a sin
 When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by heaven,
 My blood begins my safer guides to rule ;

And passion, having my best^a judgment collied,^a
Assays to lead the way : If I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on :
And he that is approv'd in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall loose me.—What ! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestic quarrel,
In night, and on the court and guard of safety !
'T is monstrous.—Iago, who began 't ?

Mon. If partially affin'd, or leagu'd in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near :
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio ;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him.—This it is, general.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow crying out for help ;
And Cassio following him with determin'd sword,
To execute upon him : Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause ;
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Lest, by his clamour, (as it so fell out,)
The town might fall in fright : he, swift of foot,
Outran my purpose ; and I return'd then rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
And Cassio high in oath ; which, till to-night,
I ne'er might say before : When I came back,
(For this was brief,) I found them close together,
At blow, and thrust ; even as again they were
When you yourself did part them.
More of this matter cannot I report :—

^a *Collied*—blackened—discoloured.

But men are men : the best sometimes forget :—
 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,—
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best,—
 Yet surely Cassio, I believe, receiv'd
 From him that fled some strange indignity,
 Which patience could not pass.

Oth. I know, Iago,
 Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
 Making it light to Cassio :—Cassio, I love thee ;
 But never more be officer of mine.

Enter DESDEMONA, attended.

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up ;—
 I 'll make thee an example.

Des. What is the matter, dear ?

Oth. All 's well, sweeting.
 Come away to bed. Sir, for your hurts,
 Myself will be your surgeon : Lead him off.

[*To MON., who is led off.*

Iago, look with care about the town ;
 And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.
 Come, Desdemona ; 't is the soldier's life
 To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.

[*Exeunt all but IAGO and CAS.*

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant ?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid !

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation ! O, I have
 lost my reputation ! I have lost the immortal part of
 myself, and what remains is bestial.—My reputation,
 Iago, my reputation.

Iago. As I am an honest man I had thought you had
 received some bodily wound ; there is more sense^a in
 that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and
 most false imposition ; oft got without merit, and lost
 without deserving : You have lost no reputation at all,

^a *Sense.* The sense of a wound is its sensibility.

unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: You are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion: sue to him again, and he is yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

Iago. What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is 't possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: How came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil drunkenness, to give place to the devil wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler: As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange!—Every inordinate cup is unblest'd, and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir.—I drunk!

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at a time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general:—I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation,—mark,—and devotement of her parts and graces:—confess yourself freely to her; importune her help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested: This broken joint, between you and her husband, entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [Exit CASSIO]

Iago. And what's he then that says I play the villain?

When this advice ~~is~~ ^{is} free, I give, and honest,
 Probab^a to thinking, and indeed the course
 To win the Moor again? For 't is most easy
 The inclining Desdemona to subdue
 In any honest suit; she's fram'd as fruitful
 As the free elements. And then for her
 To win the Moor,—were't to renounce his baptism,
 All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,—

^a Probab—probable.

His soul is so enfetters'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain,
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now: For whiles this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortune,
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,—
That she repeats him for her body's lust;
And by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
So will I turn her virtue into pitch;
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.—How now, Roderigo?

Enter RODERIGO.

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound
that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is
almost spent; I have been to-night exceedingly well
cudgelled; and, I think, the issue will be I shall have so
much experience for my pains: and so, with no money
at all, and a little more wit, return to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st, we work by wit and not by witchcraft;
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does 't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio:
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe:
Content thyself a while.—In troth, 't is morning;
Pleasure, and action, make the hours seem short.
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:

Away, I say, thou shalt know more hereafter :
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit* ROB.] Two things are to
be done,—

My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress,
I'll set her on ;

Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart,
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife :—Ay, that 's the way ;
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Before the Castle.*

Enter CASSIO, and some Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here, I will content your pains,
Something that 's brief : and bid, Good-morrow, general.
[*Music.*

Enter Clown.

Clo. Why, masters, have your instruments been in
Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus ?

1 Mus. How, sir, how ?

Clo. Are these, I pray you, wind instruments ?

1 Mus. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tail.

1 Mus. Whereby hangs a tale, sir ?

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind instrument that
know. But, masters, here 's money for you : and the
general so likes your music that he desires you, for love's
sake, to make no more noise with it.

1 Mus. Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any music that may not be heard,
to 't again : but, as they say, to hear music the general
does not greatly care.

1 Mus. We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll
away : Go ; vanish into air ; away. [*Exeunt Musicians.*

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend ?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend ; I hear you.

Cas. Prithee, keep up thy quilllets. There 's a poor
piece of gold for thee : if the gentlewoman that attends
the general's wife be stirring, tell her there 's one Cassio
entreats her a little favour of speech : Wilt thou do
this ?

Clo. She is stirring, sir; if she will stir hither I shall seem to notify unto her. [Exit.

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: My suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently.
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free. [Exit.

Cas. I humbly thank you for 't. I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Good morrow, good lieutenant: I am sorry
For your displeasure; but all will sure be well.
The general and his wife are talking of it,
And she speaks for you stoutly: The Moor replies,
That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus,
And great affinity; and that, in wholesome wisdom,
He might not but refuse you: but he protests he loves you
And needs no other suitor, but his likings,
To take the saf'st occasion by the front,
To bring you in again.

Cas. Yet, I beseech you,—
If you think fit, or that it may be done,—
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

Emil. Pray you, come in;
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

Cas. I am much bound to you. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Gentlemen.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
And, by him, do my duties to the senate:
That done, I will be walking on the works,—
Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I'll do 't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

Gent. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Before the Castle.*

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA.

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do; I warrant it grieves my
husband,

As if the cause were his.

Des. O, that 's an honest fellow.—Do not doubt,
Cassio,

But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.

Cas. Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He 's never any thing but your true servant.

Des. I know 't,—I thank you: You do love my
lord:

You have known him long; and be you well assur'd
He shall in strangeness stand no farther off
Than in a politic distance.

Cas. Ay, but, lady,
That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,

That I, being absent, and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service.

Des. Do not doubt that; before Emilia here,
I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship I'll perform it
To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
I'll watch him tame,* and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I'll intermingle every thing he does
With Cassio's suit: Therefore be merry, Cassio,
For thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.

Enter OTHELLO and IAGO at a distance.

Emil. Madam, here comes
My lord.

Cas. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Des. Why, stay,
And hear me speak.

Cas. Madam, not now; I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.

Des. Well; do your discretion. [*Exit* **CASSIO**.]

Iago. Ha! I like not that.

Oth. What dost thou say?

Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if—I know not what.

Oth. Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

Iago. Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing your coming.

Oth. I do believe 't was he.

Des. How now, my lord?

I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

Oth. Who is't you mean?

Des. Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace, or power to move you,

* Hawks were tamed by being kept from sleep.

His present reconciliation take ;
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face :
I prithee call him back.

Oth. Went he hence now ?

Des. Ay, sooth ; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona ;^a some other time.

Des. But shall 't be shortly ?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

Des. Shall 't be to-night at supper ?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then ?

Oth. I shall not dine at home ;
I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night ; on Tuesday morn ;
On Tuesday noon, or night ; on Wednesday morn ;—
I prithee name the time ; but let it not
Exceed three days : in faith he 's penitent ;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason,
(Save that, they say, the wars must make example
Out of their best,) is not almost a fault
To incur a private check : When shall he come ?
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,
What you would ask me that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering^b on. What¹ Michael Cassio,
That came a wooing with you ; and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,

^a *Sweet Desdemona.* In five passages of this play, in the folio edition, Desdemona is called *Desdemon*. The abbreviation was not a capricious one, nor was it introduced merely for the sake of rhythm. It is clearly used as an epithet of familiar tenderness.

^b *Mammering.* The quarto, *muttering*. The word, having the meaning of *suspense—doubt*, is constantly used by our old writers.

Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much,—

Oth. Prithee, no more: let him come when he will;
I will deny thee nothing.

Des. Why, this is not a boon;
'T is as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm;
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person: Nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poize and difficult weight,
And fearful to be granted.

Oth. I will deny thee nothing:
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.

Des. Shall I deny you? no: Farewell, my lord.

Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona: I'll come to thee
straight.

Des. Emilia, come:—Be as your fancies teach you;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient. [*Exit, with EMILIA.*]

Oth. Excellent wretch!^a Perdition catch my soul
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not
Chaos is come again.

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

Oth. He did, from first to last: Why dost thou ask?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?

Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

^a *Wretch*. The playhouse copies, in their nicely-critical phraseology, give us *wench* instead of *wretch*. Johnson properly explains *wretch* as expressing "the utmost degree of amiableness, joined with an idea, which perhaps all tenderness includes, of feebleness, softness, and want of protection."

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed?

Oth. Indeed? ay, indeed:—Discern'st thou aught in that?

Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord?

Oth. Honest? Ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord?

Oth. Think, my lord? Alas! thou echoest me

As if there were some monster in thy thought

Too hideous to be shown.—Thou dost mean something:

I heard thee say even now,—Thou lik'dst not that,

When Cassio left my wife: What didst not like?

And, when I told thee he was of my counsel

In my whole course of wooing, thou cry'dst, Indeed?

And didst contract and purse thy brow together,

As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain

Some horrible conceit: If thou dost love me

Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Oth. I think thou dost;

And, for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty,

And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath,

Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:

For such things in a false disloyal knave

Are tricks of custom; but in a man that's just,

They're close delations,^a working from the heart,

That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio,—

I dare be sworn I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

^a *Delations.* We have adopted Johnson's ingenious suggestion, that the *delations* of the folio was *delations*—secret accusations. Sir Henry Wotton uses *delations* in the same sense.

Iago. Men should be what they seem
 On these that be not 'would they might seem none!

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why then, I think Cassio's an honest man.

Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this?

I prithee speak to me, as to thy thinkings,
 As thou dost ruminate; and give thy worst of thoughts
 The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me;
 Though I am bound to every act of duty,
 I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
 Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and false,—
 As where's that palace whereinto foul things
 Sometimes intrude not?—who has a breast so pure,
 But some uncleanly apprehensions
 Keep leets and law-days, and in sessions sit
 With meditations lawful?

Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
 If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear
 A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you,
 Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess,
 (As I confess it is my nature's plague
 To spy into abuses, and of my jealousy
 Shapes faults that are not,) that your wisdom
 From one that so imperfectly conceits
 Would take no notice; nor build yourself a trouble
 Out of his scattering and unsure observance:
 It were not for your quiet, nor your good,
 Nor for my manhood, honesty, and wisdom,
 To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
 Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
 Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, no-
 thing;
 'T was mine, 't is his, and has been slave to thousands;

But he that filches from me my good name,
 Robs me of that which not enriches him,
 And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. I 'll know thy thoughts.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
 Nor shall not, whilst 't is in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
 It is the green-ey'd monster, which doth mock
 The meat it feeds on :^a That cuckold lives in bliss
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
 But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,
 Who dotes, yet doubts ; suspects, yet fondly loves !

Oth. O misery !

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;
 But riches, fineless,^b is as poor as winter,
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor :
 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy !

Oth. Why ! why is this ?
 Think'st thou, I 'd make a life of jealousy,
 To follow still the changes of the moon
 With fresh suspicions ? No : to be once in doubt,
 Is once to be resolv'd : Exchange me for a goat,
 When I shall turn the business of my soul
 To such exsufflicate^c and blow'd surmises,

^a Malone adopts the reading,—

“ It is the green-ey'd monster which doth make
 The meat it feeds on.”

We have no doubt that *mock* is the true word ; and that it may
 be explained, which doth play with,—half receive, half reject,
 —the meat it feeds on.

^b *Fineless*—endless.

^c *Exsufflicate*. Todd, in his edition of ‘ Johnson’s Dictionary,’
 says that *exsufflicate* may be traced to the low Latin *essufflare*,
 to spit down upon, an ancient form of exorcising, and figuratively
 to spit out in abhorrence or contempt. *Exsufflicate* may thus
 signify contemptible.

Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous,
 To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
 Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances ;
 Where virtue is, these are more virtuous :
 Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
 The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt ,
 For she had eyes, and chose me : No, Iago ;
 I'll see before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove :
 And, on the proof, there is no more but this,—
 Away at once with love, or jealousy.

Iago. I am glad of this ; for now I shall have reason
 To show the love and duty that I bear you
 With franker spirit : therefore, as I am bound,
 Receive it from me :—I speak not yet of proof.
 Look to your wife ; observe her well with Cassio ;
 Wear your eyes thus,—not jealous, nor secure ;
 I would not have your free and noble nature,
 Out of self-bounty, be abus'd ; look to 't .
 I know our country disposition well ;
 In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
 They dare not show their husbands ; their best consti-
 tience is not to leave undone, but keep unknown.

Oth. Dost thou say so ?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
 And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
 She lov'd them most.

Oth. And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to, then ;
 She that so young could give out such a seeming,
 To seal her father's eyes up, close as oak,
 He thought 't was witchcraft :—But I am much to
 blame ;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
 For too much loving you.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see, this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
 I hope you will consider what is spoke
 Comes from my love :—But I do see you are mov'd :—
 I am to pray you not to strain my speech
 To grosser issues, nor to larger reach
 Than to suspicion.

Oth. I will not.

Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
 My speech should fall into such vile success *
 Which my thoughts aim'd not. Cassio's my worthy
 friend :—

My lord, I see you are mov'd.

Oth. No, not much mov'd :—
 I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so ! and long live you to think so !

Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself,—

Iago. Ay, there's the point :—As,—to be bold with
 you,—

Not to affect many proposed matches
 Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;
 Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends ;
 Foh ! one may smell in such a will most rank,
 Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural,—
 But, pardon me ; I do not in position
 Distinctly speak of her : though I may fear,
 Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
 May fall to match you with her country forms,
 And, happily, repent.

Oth. Farewell, farewell :
 If more thou dost perceive let me know more ;
 Set on thy wife to observe : Leave me, Iago.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [*Going.*]

Oth. Why did I marry ? — This honest creature,
 doubtless,

Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord, I would I might entreat your honour

* *Success*—succession—consequence.

To scan this thing no farther; leave it to time:
Although 't is fit that Cassio have his place,
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,)
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means:
Note, if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
(As worthy cause I have to fear I am,)
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government.

Iago. I once more take my leave.

[*Exit.*

Oth. This fellow 's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealings: If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
To prey at fortune.* Haply, for I am black;
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have: Or, for I am declin'd
Into the vale of years;—yet that 's not much:—
She 's gone; I am abus'd; and my relief
Must be to loath her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
For other's uses. Yet 't is the plague of great ones;
Prerogativ'd are they less than the base;
'T is destiny unshunnable, like death;
Even then this forked plague is fated to us,
When we do quicken. Look, where she comes.

* The images in this sentence are derived from falconry. Some doubts exist whether *the haggard* was an unreclaimed hawk: but there is no doubt that the old adjective *haggard* means wild. The *jesses* are the footstraps of a hawk.

Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!

I'll not believe 't.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?

Your dinner, and the generous islanders

By you invited, do attend your presence.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why do you speak so faintly?
Are you not well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. Why, that's with watching; 't will away again:

Let me but bind it hard, within this hour

It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin^a is too little;

[He puts the handkerchief from him, and it drops.]

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[Exeunt OTH. and DES.]

Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin;
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:

My wayward husband hath a hundred times

Woo'd me steal it: but she so loves the token,

(For he conjur'd her she should ever keep it,)

That she reserves it evermore about her,

To kiss, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,^b

And give 't Iago; what he will do with it,

Heaven knows, not I:

I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?

^a *Napkin* and *handkerchief* were synonymous

^b Emilia does not propose to obliterate the work, but to *copy* the work, and to restore the original to Desdemona. Iago's abrupt address frightens her from her purpose. That *ta'en out* means copied, we find in the subsequent scene, when Cassio says to Bianca, *take me this work out. . . . I'd have it copied.*

Emil. Do not you chide ; I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me ?—it is a common thing—

Emil. Ha !

Iago. To have a foolish wife.

Emil. O, is that all ? What will you give me
now

For that same handkerchief ?

Iago. What handkerchief ?

Emil. What handkerchief ?

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona ;
That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stolen it from her ?

Emil. No ; but she let it drop by negligence :
And, to the advantage, I being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench ; give it me.

Emil. What will you do with 't, that you have been
so earnest

To have me filch it ?

Iago. Why, what 's that to you ?

[Snatching it.

Emil. If it be not for some purpose of import,
Give 't me again : Poor lady ! she 'll run mad
When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not acknown on 't : I have use for it.
Go, leave me.

[Exit EMILIA.

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it : Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison :
Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste ;
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur.—I did say so—

* I did say so. These words are simply used in the common
sense—I said so—I was right.

Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora,*
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday.

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?

Iago. Why, how now, general? no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the
rack :—

I swear, 't is better to be much abus'd,
Than but to know 't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord?

Oth. What sense had I in her stolen hours of lust?

I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me :
I slept the next night well, fed well, was free and merry ;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips :
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know 't, and he 's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known : O now, for ever,
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troops, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner ; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!
And O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
Farewell! Othello's occupation 's gone!

Iago. Is 't possible, my lord?

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ;

* *Mandragora.* The mandrake was used by the ancients as a powerful opiate.

Measure of it; give me the ocular proof;

[*Taking him by the throat.*]

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
Than answer my wak'd wrath.

Iago. Is 't come to this?

Oth. Make me see 't; or, at the least, so prove it,
That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
To hang a doubt on: or woe upon thy life!

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more: abandon all remorse;
On horror's head horrors accumulate:
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amaz'd,
For nothing canst thou to damnation add,
Greater than that.

Iago. O grace! O heaven forgive^a me!
Are you a man? have you a soul, or sense?—
God be wi' you; take mine office.—O wretched fool,
That lov'st^b to make thine honesty a vice,—
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world,
To be direct and honest is not safe.

I thank you for this profit; and, from hence,
I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay:—Thou shouldst be honest.

Iago. I should be wise; for honesty's a fool,
And loses that it works for.

Oth. By the world,
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not;
I'll have some proof: My name,^c that was as fresh

^a *Forgive.* The quarto *defend*.

^b *Lov'st.* The man that *loves* to carry his honesty so far that it becomes a vice, is what Iago means when he calls himself a fool.

^c *My name.* In all modern editions, except Rowe's, this has been changed into *her* name. There is probably not a more fatal corruption of the meaning of the poet amongst the thou-

As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
As mine own face.—If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it.—Would I were satisfied!

Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion :
I do repent me that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied ?

Oth. Would ? nay, and I will.

Iago. And may : But how ? how satisfied, my lord ?

Would you the supervision grossly gape on ?
Behold her topp'd !

Oth. Death and damnation ! O !

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect : Damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster,
More than their own ! What then ? how then ?
What shall I say ? Where 's satisfaction ?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation, and strong circumstances,

and corruptions for which his editors are answerable. It destroys the master-key to Othello's character. It is his intense feeling of *honour* that makes his wife's supposed fault so terrific to him. It is not that *Desdemona's* name is begrimed and black, but that *his own name* is degraded. This one thought, here for the first time exhibited, pervades all the rest of the play ; and when we understand how the poison operates upon Othello's mind, we are quite prepared fully to believe him when he says, in conclusion,—

“ For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.”

The thought that his own name is now tarnished drives him at once into a phrenzy. He has said, “ *I'll have some proof ;*” but the moment that the idea of dishonour comes across his sensitive nature, he bursts into uncontrolled fury :—

—“ If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it.”

Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you might have 't.

Oth. Give me a living reason she 's disloyal.

Iago. I do not like the office :

But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to 't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately ;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs ;
One of this kind is Cassio :

In sleep I heard him say,—Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves !

And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,
Cry,—O sweet creature ! then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips ; lay his leg o'er my thigh,
And sigh, and kiss ; and then cry,—Cursed fate
That gave thee to the Moor !

Oth. O monstrous ! monstrous !

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion ;
'T is a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise ; yet we see nothing done ;
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,—
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
Spotted with strawberries, in your wife's hand ?

Oth. I gave her such a one ; 't was my first gift.

Iago. I know not that : but such a handkerchief,
(I am sure it was your wife's,) did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

Oth. If it be that,—

Iago. If it be that or any, if 't was her's,
It speaks against her, with the other proofs.

Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives;
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge!
Now do I see 't is true.—Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus I do blow to heaven:
'T is gone.—

Arise, black vengeance, from the hollow hell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown, and hearted throne,
To tyrannous hate! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 't is of aspics' tongues!

Iago. Yet, be content.

Oth. O, blood, blood, blood!

Iago. Patience, I say; your mind may change.

Oth. Never, Iago. ^aLike to the Pontick sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er keeps retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontick and the Hellespont:
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up.—Now, by yond' marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [*Kneels.*
I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet.— [*Kneels.*
Witness, you ever-burning lights above!
You elements that clip us round about!
Witness, that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever ^b—

^a A gentleman who writes to us as "a sailor," begs us to notice this passage as exhibiting a proof of the poet's knowledge "of the continual flow of the tide through the Gut of Gibraltar."

^b It is quite clear that Othello interrupts the conclusion of Iago's speech. At the moment when he has said that obedience to Othello shall stand in the place of remorse (mercy)—"What bloody business ever" (Othello may command), Othello, jumping at his meaning, at once sets him upon the murder of Cassio.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't :
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio 's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead ; 't is done, at your request :
But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx ! O, damn her !
Come, go with me apart ; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*The same.*

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Clown.

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where lieutenant Cassio lies ?

Clo. I dare not say he lies any where.

Des. Why, man ?

Clo. He is a soldier ; and for me to say a soldier lies is stabbing.

Des. Go to 't. Where lodges he ?

Clo. To tell you where he lodges is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this ?

Clo. I know not where he lodges ; and for me to devise a lodging, and say he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report ?

Clo. I will catechize the world for him ; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither ; tell him, I have moved my lord in his behalf, and hope all will be well.

Clo. To do this is within the compass of man's wit ; and therefore I will attempt the doing it. [Exit.]

Des. Where should I lose the handkerchief, Emilia ?

Emil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of cruzadoes. And, but my noble Moor
Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

Emil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who, he? I think the sun, where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

Emil. Look where he comes.

Des. I will not leave him now, till Cassio
Be call'd to him.—How is 't with you, my lord?

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Well, my good lady;—[*Aside.*] O, hardness,
to dissemble!—
How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand: This hand is moist, my
lady.

Des. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart;
Hot, hot, and moist: This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here 's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'T is a good hand,
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 't was that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand: The hearts of old gave hands:
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts.

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

Oth. I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me;
Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault:

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give;

She was a charmer, and could almost read

The thoughts of people: she told her, while she kept it,

'T would make her amiable, and subdue my father

Entirely to her love; but if she lost it,

Or made a gift of it, my father's eye

Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt

After new fancies: She, dying, gave it me;

And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,

To give it her. I did so: and take heed on 't,

Make it a darling like your precious eye;

To lose 't or give 't away, were such perdition

As nothing else could match.

Des. Is 't possible?

Oth. 'T is true: There 's magic in the web of it:

A sibyl, that had number'd in the world

The sun to course two hundred compasses,

In her prophetic fury sew'd the work:

The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk;

And it was dy'd in ~~the~~ ^{her} ~~sun~~ ^{sun}my, which the skilful

Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.

Des. Indeed; is 't true?

Oth. Most veritable; therefore look to 't well.

Des. Then 'would to heaven that I had never seen it.

Oth. Ha! wherefore?

Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

Oth. Is 't lost? is 't gone? speak, is 't out of the way?

Des. Bless us!

Oth. Say you?

Des. It is not lost: But what and if it were?

Oth. How ?

Des. I say, it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch 't, let me see it.

Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now ;

This is a trick, to put me from my suit ;

Pray you, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

Oth. Fetch me the handkerchief : my mind misgives.

Des. Come, come ;

You 'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. A man that, all his time,

Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,

Shar'd dangers with you ;—

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. In sooth, you are to blame.

Oth. Away ! [Exit OTHELLO.]

Emil. Is not this man jealous ?

Des. I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there 's some wonder in this handkerchief ;

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

Emil. 'T is not a year or two shows us a man :

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food ;

They eat us hungerly, and when they are full

They belch us. Look you ! Cassio, and my husband.

Enter IAGO and CASSIO.

Iago. There is no other way ; 't is she must do 't ;
And, lo, the happiness ! go, and importune her.

Des. How now, good Cassio ? what 's the news with you ?

Cas. Madam, my former suit : I do beseech you,
That, by your virtuous means, I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love,
Whom I, with all the office of my heart,
Entirely honour ; I would not be delay'd ;

If my offence be of such mortal kind,
 That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,
 Nor purpos'd merit in futurity
 Can ransom me into his love again,
 But to know so must be my benefit;
 So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
 And shut myself up in some other course,
 To fortune's alms.

Des. Alas! thrice-gentle Cassio,
 My advocacy is not now in tune;
 My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
 Were he in favour, as in humour, alter'd.
 So help me every spirit sanctified,
 As I have spoken for you all my best,
 And stood within the blank of his displeasure,
 For my free speech! You must awhile be patient:
 What I can do I will; and more I will,
 Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Emil. He went hence but now,
 And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air;
 And, like the devil, from his very arm
 Puff'd his own brother;—And can he be angry?
 Something of moment, then: I will go meet him;
 There's matter in 't, indeed, if he be angry.

Des. I prithee, do so.—Something, sure, of state,

[*Exit IAGO.*]

Either from Venice; or some unhatch'd practice
 Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
 Hath puddled his clear spirit: and, in such cases,
 Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
 Though great ones are their object. 'T is even so;
 For let our finger ache, and it indues
 Our other healthful members ev'n to a sense
 Of pain: Nay, we must think men are not gods;

Nor of them look for such observancy
As fits the bridal.—Beshrew me much, Emilia,
I was (unhandsome warrior as I am)
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indicted falsely.

Emil. Pray heaven it be state matters, as you think;
And no conception, nor no jealous toy,
Concerning you.

Des. Alas, the day! I never gave him cause.

Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they're jealous: It is a monster,
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des. Heaven keep the monster from Othello's mind!

Emil. Lady, amen.

Des. I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout:
If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*]

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!

Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
Indeed, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What! keep a week away? seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
O weary reckoning!

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continue^a time,

^a *Continue time*, is time uninterrupted

Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[Giving her DEEDMONA's handkerchief.]
 Take me this work out.

Bian. O, Cassio, whence came this?
 This is some token from a newer friend.
 To the felt absence now I feel a cause.
 Is 't come to this? Well, well.

Cas. Go to, woman!
 Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
 From whence you have them. You are jealous now
 That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
 No, in good troth, Bianca.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, neither: I found it in my chamber.
 I like the work well: ere it be demanded,
 (As like enough it will,) I'd have it copied:
 Take it, and do 't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Cas. I do attend here on the general;
 And think it no addition, nor my wish,
 To have him see me woman'd.

Bian. Why, I pray you?

Cas. Not that I love you not.

Bian. But that you do not love me.
 I pray you bring me on the way a little;
 And say, if I shall see you soon at night.

Cas. 'T is but a little way that I can bring you,
 For I stand here: but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'T is very good: I must be circumstanc'd.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Before the Castle.**Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.**Iago.* Will you think so?*Oth.* Think so, ~~Iago~~ ^{Iago}*Iago.* What,

To kiss in private?

Oth. An unauthoriz'd ~~Kiss~~ ^{Kiss}?*Iago.* Or to be naked with her friend in bed,
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm?*Oth.* Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm?
It is hypocrisy against the devil:They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.*Iago.* If they do nothing, 't is a venial slip:
But if I give my wife a handkerchief,—*Oth.* What then?*Iago.* Why then 't is hers, my lord; and, being hers,
She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.*Oth.* She is protectress of her honour too;
May she give that?*Iago.* Her honour is an essence that 's not seen;
They have it very oft that have it not:

But, for the handkerchief,—

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot
it:—Thou said'st,—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infectious house,
Boding to all,—he had my handkerchief.*Iago.* Ay, what of that?*Oth.* That 's not so good, now.

Iago. What, if I had said I had seen him do you wrong?

Or heard him say, (as knaves be such abroad,
Who, having by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose
But they must blab,)—

Oth. Hath he said anything?

Iago. No, my lord; but be you well assur'd,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?

Iago. What he did,—I know not what he did.

Oth. What is that?

Iago. Lie—

Oth. With her?

Iago. With her;—on her;—what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her!—We say, lie on her,
when they belie her: Lie with her! that's fulsome.—
Handkerchief,—confessions,—handkerchief.—To confess,
and be hanged for his labour.—First, to be hanged,
and then to confess:—I tremble at it. Nature would
not invest herself in such shadowing passion, without
some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus:—
Pish!—Noses, ears, and lips:—Is't possible?—Confess!
—Handkerchief!—O devil! [*Falls, in a trance.*]

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless meet reproach.—What, ho! my lord!

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

Cas. What is the matter?

* The stage direction of the folio is, *falls in a trance*. We have altered this translation to express, what no doubt was meant, that Othello actually falls. The direction of the first quarto is, *he falls down*. Iago's statement to Cassio, *my lord has fallen into a trance*, is not meant for a falsehood.

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy;
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Cas. Rub him about the temples.

Iago. No, forbear:

The lethargy must have his quiet course: ⁴¹¹
If not, he foams at mouth; and, by and by,
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight: when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you.—

[*Exit CASSIO.*]

How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

Oth. Dost thou mock me?

Iago. I mock you? no, by heaven:

'Would you would bear your fortune like a man.

Oth. A horned man's a monster, and a beast.

Iago. There's many a beast then in a populous city,
And many a civil monster.

Oth. Did he confess it?

Iago. Good sir, be a man;

Think, every bearded fellow that's but yok'd
May draw with you: there's millions now alive
That nightly lie in those unproper beds,
Which they dare swear peculiar; your case is better.
O, 't is the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

Oth. O, thou art wise; 't is certain.

Iago. Stand you awhile apart;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.^a
Whilst you were here, o'erwhelmed with your grief,
(A passion most unsuited such a man,)
Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy;
Bade him anon return, and here speak with me;

^a List—bound, barrer.

The which he promis'd. Do but encave yourself,
 And mark the flocks, the gibes, and notable scorns,
 That dwell in every region of his face ;
 For I will make him tell the tale anew,—
 Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
 He hath, and is again to cope your wife ;
 I say, but mark his gesture Marry, patience ;
 Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,
 And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago ?
 I will be found most cunning in my patience ;
 But (dost thou hear ?) most bloody.

Iago. That 's not amiss ;
 But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw ?

[*OTHELLO withdraws.*]

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
 A housewife, that by selling her desires
 Buys herself bread and clothes : it is a creature
 That dotes on Cassio,—as 't is the strumpet's plague,
 To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one ;—
 He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
 From the excess of laughter :—Here he comes :—

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;
 And his unbookish jealousy must construe
 Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,
 Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant ?

Cas. The worse, that you give me the addition,
 Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on 't.
 Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's dower,* [*Speaking lower.*]
 How quickly should you speed ?

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already ! [*Aside.*]

Iago. I never knew woman love man so.

* *Dower*, in the sense of gift.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think indeed she loves me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

[*Aside.*

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er: Go to; well said, well said. [*Aside.*

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her:

Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

[*Aside.*

Cas. I marry!—what? a customer! Prithee bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: They laugh that win. [*Aside.*

Iago. Why, the cry goes, that you marry her.

Cas. Prithee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scored me? Well. [*Aside.*

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me; now he begins the story.

[*Aside.*

Cas. She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes the bauble, and falls me thus about my neck;—

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it.

[*Aside.*

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so shakes and pulls me: ha, ha, ha!—

Oth. Now he tells how she plucked him to my chamber: O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

[*Aside.*

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look, where she comes.

Enter BIANCA.

Cas. 'Tis such another fitchew! marry, a perfumed one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work!—A likely piece of work that you should find it in your chamber, and know not who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work! There,—give it your hobby horse: where-soever you had it I'll take out no work on't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now, how now?

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

[*Aside.*

Bian. If you'll come to supper to-night you may, if you will not, come when you are next prepared for. [*Ex.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. I must; she'll rail in the streets else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. Yes, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Prithee, come: Will you?

Iago. Go too; say no more. [*Exit CASIO.*

Oth. How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

Oth. O, Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

Oth. I would have him nine years a killing:—A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night; for she shall not live: No, my heart is turned to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature: she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that 's not your way.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is:—So delicate with her needle!—An admirable musician! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear!—Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!

Iago. She 's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand, a thousand times:—And then, of so gentle a condition!

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that 's certain: But yet the pity of it, Iago!—O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend; for, if it touch not you it comes near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes:—Cuckold me!

Iago. O, 't is foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer!

Iago. That 's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago; this night:—I 'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again:—this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison; strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases; very good.

Iago. And, for Cassio,—let me be his undertaker: You shall hear more by midnight. [*A trumpet within.*]

Oth. Excellent good.—What trumpet is that same?

Iago. I warrant, something from Venice.

'T is Lodovico, this, comes from the duke;
See, your wife 's with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and Attendants.

Lod. 'Save you, worthy general!

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

[*Gives him a packet.*]

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

[*Opens the packet and reads.*]

Des. And what 's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;

Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you: how does lieutenant Cassio?

Iago. Lives, sir.

Des. Cousin, there 's fallen between him and my lord
An unkind breach: but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that?

Des. My lord?

Oth. This fail you not to do, as you will— [*Reads*]

Lod. He did not call: he 's busy in the paper.

Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

Des. A most unhappy one; I would do much
To atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone!

Des. My lord?

Oth. Are you wise?

Des. What, is he angry?

Lod. May be, the letter mov'd him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. Trust me, I am glad on 't.

Oth. Indeed?

Des. My lord?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. Why, sweet Othello?

Oth. Devil! [*Striking her.*]

Des. I have not deserv'd this.

Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,

Though I should swear I saw 't: 'T is very much;
Make her amends, she weeps.

Oth. O devil, devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls^a would prove a crocodile:—
Out of my sight!

Des. I will not stay to offend you. [*Going.*

Lod. Truly, an obedient lady:—
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress—

Des. My lord?

Oth. What would you with her, sir?

Lod. Who, I, my lord?

Oth. Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn;
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she 's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—
Very obedient:—Proceed you in your tears.—
Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted passion!
I am commanded home:—Get you away;
I 'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice;—Hence, avaunt!

[*Exit Des.*
Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together.
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and monkeys!

[*Exit.*
Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call all-in-all sufficient?—Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze, nor pierce?

Iago. He is much chang'd.

Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He is that he is; I may not breathe my cen-
sure.

^a *Falls*, used as a verb active.

What he might be,—if, what he might, he is not,—
I would to heaven, he were.

Lod. What, strike his wife!

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; Yet 'would I
knew

That stroke would prove the worst.

Lod. Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new-create his fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me, to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him;
And his own courses will denote him so,
That I may save my speech: Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

Lod. I am sorry that I am deceiv'd in him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.

Oth. You have seen nothing then?

Emil. Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.

Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Emil. But then I saw no harm; and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.

Oth. What, did they never whisper?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. Nor send you out o' the way?

Emil. Never.

Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing?

Emil. Never, my lord.

Oth. That 's strange.

Emil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head,

Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither:—go.— [*Exit EMIL.*
She says enough;—yet she's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet-lock-and-key of villainous secrets:
And yet she'll kneel, and pray; I have seen her do 't.

Re-enter EMILIA, with DESDEMONA.

Des. My lord, what is your will?

Oth. Pray you, chuck, come hither.

Des. What is your pleasure?

Oth. Let me see your eyes;
Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this?

Oth. Some of your function, mistress; [*To EMIL.*
Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;
Cough, or cry hem, if any body come:
Your mystery, your mystery;—nay, despatch.

[*Exit EMIL.*

Des. Upon my knee what doth your speech import?
I understand a fury in your words,
But not the words.

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord; your true and loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double-damn'd,
Swear—thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

Des. To whom, my lord? with whom? How am I
false?

Oth. Ah Desdemon!—away! away! away!

Des. Alas, the heavy day!—Why do you weep?

Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
 If, haply, you my father do suspect
 An instrument of this your calling back,
 Lay not your blame on me; if you have lost him,
 I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleas'd heaven
 To try me with affliction; had he rain'd
 All kinds of sores, and shames, on my bare head;
 Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips;
 Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
 I should have found in some place of my soul
 A drop of patience: but, alas! to make me
 The fixed figure for the time of scorn
 To point his slow and moving finger at,^a—
 Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:
 But there, where I have garner'd up my heart;
 Where either I must live, or bear no life;
 The fountain from the which my current runs,
 Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!
 Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads
 To knot and gender in! turn thy complexion there,
 Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin!
 Ay, there, look grim as hell!

Des. I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
 That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
 Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,

^a By the *fixed figure* we understand, literally, a living man exposed to public shame. By *the time* we receive the same idea as in Hamlet:—

“For who would bear the whips and scorns of time?”

Time is by Hamlet distinctly used to express the *times*, the *age*. In the passage before us, then, *the time of scorn* is *the age of scorn*. The *slow finger* is the *pausing finger*, pointing at the fixed figure; but, while it points, it *moves in mockery*. Shakspere was probably thinking of the *Digitus Monstrari* of the ancients, and it may be, also, of the finger gesticulations of the Italians.

That the sense aches at thee,—'would thou had'st ne'er been born!

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write whore upon? What committed?^a
Committed?—O thou public commoner!

I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds.—What committed?
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks;
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not bear it: What committed?

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are not you a strumpet?

Des. No, as I am a Christian;
If to preserve this vessel for my lord,
From any other foul unlawful touch,
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Oth. What, not a whore?

Des. No, as I shall be saved.

Oth. Is't possible?

Des. O, heaven forgive us!

Oth. I cry you mercy, then;
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
That married with Othello.—You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell; You! you! ay, you!

Re-enter EMILIA.

We have done our course; there's money for your pains;
I pray you turn the key, and keep our counsel. [*Exit.*]

^a *What committed?* Desdemona has asked—

"Alas! what ignorant sin have I committed?"

Othello, indignant at the question, with a mocking fury repeats it four times—*what committed?*

Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?—
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. 'Faith, half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter with my lord?

Des. With who?

Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.

Des. Who is thy lord?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady

Des. I have none: Do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,
But what should go by water. Prithee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—remember;—
And call thy husband hither.

Emil. Here's a change, indeed! [*Exit.*]

Des. 'T is meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

Re-enter EMILIA, with IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is 't
with you?

Des. I cannot tell. Those that do teach young babes,
Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What is the matter, lady?

Emil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
That true hearts cannot bear it.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name, fair lady?

Des. Such as she said my lord did say I was.

Emil. He call'd her whore; a beggar, in his drink,
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know; I am sure I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep; Alas the day!

Emil. Has she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be called whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for 't!
How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, heaven doth know.

Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devis'd this slander; I will be hang'd else.

Iago. Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

Emil. A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his
bones!

Why should he call her whore? who keeps her com-
pany?

What place? what time? what form? what likeli-
hood?

The Moor's abus'd by some most villainous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow:—
O, heaven, that such companions thou 'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascals naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

Iago. Speak within door.

Emil. O, fie upon them! some such squire he was
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago. You are a fool; go to.

Des. Alas, Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel;
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed;

Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
 Delighted them in any other form;
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will,—though he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,
 Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
 And his unkindness may defeat my life,
 But never taint my love. I cannot say, whore;
 It does abhor me, now I speak the word;
 To do the act that might the addition earn,
 Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content; 't is but his humour;
 The business of the state does him offence,
 And he does chide with you.

Des. If 't were no other!

Iago. It is but so, I warrant. [*Trumpets.*
 Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!
 The messengers of Venice stay the meat.
 Go in, and weep not: all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA.*

Enter RODERIGO.

How now, Roderigo?

Rod. I do not find that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Rod. Every day thou dost me with some device,
Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keep'st from
 me all conveniency, than suppliest me with the least
 advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it:
 Nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already
 I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Rod. I have heard too much; and your words and
 performances are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself

out of my means. The jewels you have had from me, to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a votarist : You have told me she hath received them, and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance : but I find none.

Iago. Well ; go to ; very well.

Rod. Very well ! go to ! I cannot go to, man ; nor 't is not very well. Nay, I think, it is scurvy ; and begin to find myself fobbed in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you, 't is not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona : If she will return me my jewels I will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation ; if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee ; and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo : Thou hast taken against me a most just exception ; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appeared.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared ; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,—this night show it : if thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it ? is it within reason and compass ?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania, and taketh away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean removing him?

Iago. Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me to do?

Iago. Ay; if you dare do yourself a profit, and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him;—he knows not yet of his honourable fortune: if you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one,) you may take him at your pleasure; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste: about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

Oth. O, pardon me; 't will do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome.

Oth. Will you walk, sir?

O, Desdemona,—

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant; I will be returned forthwith: dismiss your attendant there; look it be done.

Des. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt OTH., LOD., and Attendants.*]

Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says he will return incontinent;
And hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu;
We must not now displease him.

Emil. Ay, would you had never seen him!

Des. So would not I; my love doth so approve
him,
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns,—
Prithee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.

Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the
bed.

Des. All 's one:—Good father! how foolish are our
minds!—
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd Barbara;
She was in love; and he she lov'd prov'd mad,
And did forsake her: she had a song of "willow,"
An old thing 't was, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: That song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it, like poor Barbara. Prithee, despatch.

Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.—
This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emil. A very handsome man.

Des. He speaks well.

Emil. I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his nether lip.

I.

Des. The poor soul sat singing by a sycamore tree,

Sing all a green willow ;

Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,

Sing willow, willow, willow.

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans ;

Sing willow, &c.

Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones.

Lay by these :

Sing willow, willow, willow ;

Prithee, hie thee : he'll come anon.—

Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

II.

Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve,—

Nay, that's not next.—Hark ! who is't that knocks ?

Emil. It's the wind.

Des. I call'd my love, false love ; but what said he then ?

Sing willow, &c.

If I court mo women you'll couch with mo men.

So, get thee gone ; good night. Mine eyes do itch ;

Doth that bode weeping ?

Emil. 'T is neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so.—O, these men, these men !—

Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—

That there be women do abuse their husbands

In such gross kind ?

Emil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light!

Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light;
I might do 't as well i' the dark.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

Emil. The world's a huge thing: 'T is a great price
for a small vice.

Des. In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emil. In troth, I think I should; and undo 't, when
I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a
joint-ring; nor for measures of lawn; nor for gowns,
petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition: but, for
all the whole world,—Why, who would not make her
husband a cuckold, to make him a monarch? I should
venture purgatory for 't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong for the
whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' the world;
and, having the world for your labour, 't is a wrong in
your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen; and as many to the vantage, as
would stone the world they play'd for.

But, I do think it is their husbands' faults

If wives do fall: Say, that they slack their duties,

And pour our treasures into foreign laps;

Or else break out in peevish jealousies,

Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,

Or scant our former having in despite;

Why, we have galls; and, though we have some grace,

Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know

Their wives have sense like them: they see, and smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,

As husbands have. What is it that they do,

When they change us for others? Is it sport?

I think it is: And doth affection breed it?

I think it doth : Is 't frailty that thus errs ?
It is so too : And have not we affections ?
Desires for sport ? and frailty, as men have ?
Then, let them use us well : else, let them know,
The ills we do their ills instruct us so

Des. Good night, good night : Heaven me such uses
send,
Not to pick bad from bad ; but, by bad, mend !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.**Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.*

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk ; straight will he come :

Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home ;
Quick, quick ; fear nothing ; I 'll be at thy elbow ;
It makes us, or it mars us ; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand ; I may miscarry in 't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand ; be bold, and take thy stand. [*Retires to a little distance.*]

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed ;
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons :—
'T is but a man gone :—forth, my sword ; he dies.

[*Goes to his stand.*]

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat^a almost to the sense,

And he grows angry. Now whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain : Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd from him,
As gifts to Desdemona ;
It must not be : if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly ; and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him ; there stand I in much peril :
No, he must die :—But so, I hear him coming.

^a *Quat.* Johnson explains, that a *quat*, in the midland counties, is a *pimple*, which by rubbing is made to smart, or is rubbed to sense.

Enter CASSIO.

Rod. I know his gait, 't is he :—Villain, thou diest.

[*Rushes from his post, and makes a pass at Cas.*]

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
But that my coat ^a is better than thou know'st ;
I will make proof of thine. [*Draws, and wounds Rod.*]

Rod. O, I am slain ! [*IAGO rushes from his post,
cuts CAS. behind in the leg, and exit.*]

Cas. I am maim'd for ever :—Help, ho ! murder !
murder ! [*Falls.*]

Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.

Oth. The voice of Cassio :—Iago keeps his word.

Rod. O, villain that I am !

Oth. 'T is even so.

Cas. O, help ! ho ! light ! a surgeon !

Oth. 'T is he ;—O brave Iago, honest, and just,
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong !
Thou teachest me :—Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your unblest fate lies :—Strumpet, I come :
Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted ;
Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.
[*Exit.*]

Enter LODOVICO and GRATIANO, at a distance.

Cas. What, ho ! no watch ? no passage ? ^b murder !
murder !

Gra. 'T is some mischance ; the voice is very direful.

Cas. O, help !

Lod. Hark !

Rod. O wretched villain !

Lod. Two or three groan ;—'t is heavy night : ^c

^a The coat was the buff jerkin.

^b No passage—no one passing.

^c Lodovico does not merely say that there are two or three groans from one man, but that two or three men groan ; and he adds, " these may be counterfeits." 'T is heavy night, is, 't is dark night.

These may be counterfeits; let 's think 't unsafe
To come into the cry without more help.

Rod. No body come? then shall I bleed to death.

Enter IAGO.

Lod. Hark!

Gra. Here 's one comes in his shirt, with light and
weapons.

Iago. Who 's there? whose noise is this that cries on
murther?

Lod. We do not know.

Iago. Do you not hear a cry?

Cas. Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me.

Iago. What 's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

Lod. The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done
this?

Cas. I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains!—
What are you there? come in, and give some help.

[*To LOD. and GRA.*

Rod. O, help me here!

Cas. 'That 's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain!
[*IAGO stabs ROD.*

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!— [*Dies.*

Iago. Kill men i' the dark!— Where be these bloody
thieves?—

How silent is this town! Hoa! murther! murther!
What may you be? are you of good or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy ; Here 's Cassio hurt by villains.

Gra. Cassio ?

Iago. How is 't, brother ?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid !—
Light, gentlemen ; I 'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho ? who is 't that cry'd ?

Iago. Who is 't that cry'd ?

Bian. O my dear Cassio ! my sweet Cassio ! O Cassio ! Cassio ! Cassio !

Iago. O notable strumpet !—Cassio, may you suspect Who they should be that have thus mangled you ?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry to find you thus : I have been to seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter : So.—O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence !

Bian. Alas, he faints :—O Cassio ! Cassio ! Cassio !

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.—

Patience awhile, good Cassio.—Come, come ;

Lend me a light.—Know we this face, or no ?

Alas ! my friend, and my dear countryman,
Roderigo ? no :—Yes, sure ; yes ; 't is Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice ?

Iago. Even he, sir ; did you know him ?

Gra. Know him ? ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano ? I cry your gentle pardon ;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.

Gra. I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio ?—O, a chair, a chair !

Gra. Roderigo !

Iago. He, he, 't is he :—O, that 's well said ;—the chair :— [*A chair brought in.*
Some good man bear him carefully from hence ;
I 'll fetch the general's surgeon.—For you, mistress,
[*To BIANCA.*
Save you your labour.—He that lies slain here, Cassio,
Was my dear friend : What malice was between you ?
Cas. None in the world ; nor do I know the man.
Iago. [*To BIAN.*] What, look you pale ?—O bear him o' the air.—

[*CASSIO and ROD. are borne off.*
Stay you, good gentlemen.—Look you pale, mistress ?
Do you perceive the ghastness of her eye ?—
Nay, if you stare we shall hear more anon :—
Behold her well : I pray you look upon her ;
Do you see, gentlemen ? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Alas, what is the matter ? what is the matter ; husband ?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark,
By Roderigo, and fellows that are 'scap'd ;
He 's almost slain, and Roderigo quite dead.

Emil. Alas, good gentleman ! alas, good Cassio !

Iago. This is the fruits of whoring.—Prithee, Emilia,
Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night :—
What, do you shake at that ?

Bian. He supp'd at my house ; but I therefore shake not.

Iago. O, did he so ? I charge you, go with me.

Emil. O, fie upon thee, strumpet !

Bian. I am no strumpet ; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.

Emil. As I ? fie upon thee !

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let 's go see poor Cassio dress'd :—

I cannot give it vital growth again,
It needs must wither :—I'll smell thee on the tree.—

[*Kissing her.*]

O balmy breath, that doth almost persuade
Justice to break her sword !—One more, one more.—
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
And love thee after :—One more, and that 's the last :
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears : This sorrow 's heavenly ;
It strikes where it doth love.—She wakes—

Des. Who 's there ? Othello ?

Oth. Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord ?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?

Des. Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime

Unconcoil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alack, my lord, what may you mean by that ?

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief ; I will walk by :

I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;
No,—Heavens forbend.—I would not kill thy soul.

Des. Talk you of killing ?

Oth. Ay, I do.

Des. Then heaven

Have mercy on me !

Oth. Amen, with all my heart !

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

Oth. Humph !

Des. And yet I fear you ; for you are fatal then,
When your eyes roll so : Why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not ; but yet, I feel, I fear.

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des. They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.

Des. That death 's unnatural that kills for loving.—

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip ?

Some bloody passion shakes your very frame :
 These are portents ; but yet I hope, I hope,
 They do not point on me.

Oth. Peace, and be still !

Des. I will so : What 's the matter ?

Oth. That handkerchief, which I so lov'd and gave
 thee,

Thou gav'st to Cassio.

Des. No, by my life and soul ;
 Send for the man and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
 Take heed of perjury ; thou 'rt on thy death-bed.

Des. Ay, but not yet to die.

Oth. Yes, presently ;
 Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin ;

For to deny each article with oath
 Cannot remove, nor choke, the strong conception,
 That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. O, heaven have mercy on me !

Oth. I say, amen.

Des. And have you mercy too !—I never did
 Offend you in my life ; never lov'd Cassio,
 But with such general warranty of heaven
 As I might love : I never gave him token.

Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.
 O perjur'd woman ! thou dost stone my heart,
 And mak'st me call what I intend to do,
 A murder, which I thought a sacrifice :
 I saw the handkerchief.

Des. He found it then ;
 I never gave it him :—Send for him hither ;
 Let him confess a truth.

Oth. He hath confess'd.

Des. What, my lord ?

Oth. That he hath us'd thee.

Des. How ? unlawfully ?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He will not say so.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd ;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for 't.

Des. O, my fear interprets,—What, is he dead ?

Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas ! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet ! weep'st thou for him to my
face ?

Des. O banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet !

Des. Kill me to-morrow, let me live to-night.

Oth. Nay, if you strive.—

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done,

There is no pause.^a

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late. [*He smothers her.*]

Emil. [*Within.*] My lord ! my lord ! what hoa ! my
lord ! my lord !

Oth. What noise is this ? — Not dead ! not yet quite
dead ?

I, that am cruel, am yet merciful ;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—

So, so^b

Emil. [*Within.*] What hoa, my lord ! my lord !

Oth. Who's there ?

^a The words *being done* are not addressed to Desdemona, but exhibit what is passing in Othello's mind. The conflict between his love and his wounded honour is over ; he looks upon the act of retribution as *done* when he has lifted his murderous hand against his wife. It is done. For the mere completion of the violence, which will then be mercy, "there is no pause."

^b There is no stage direction at this place in the original copies, but it is most probable that the poet intended Othello here to stab Desdemona, according to the practice of the modern stage. His previous resolution, "I'll not shed her blood," is forgotten in the agony and terror of the moment, when he says, *not dead, not yet quite dead.*

Emil. [*Within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you.

Oth. Yes;—'t is Emilia;—by and by :—She 's dead. 'T is like she comes to speak of Cassio's death; The noise was high. Ha! no more moving? Still as the grave. Shall she come in? Were 't good? I think she stirs again :—No.—What 's best to do. If she come in she 'll sure speak to my wife: My wife! my wife! what wife?—I have no wife: O, insupportable! O heavy hour! Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe Did yawn at alteration.

Emil. [*Within.*] I do beseech you that I may speak with you,
O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia :—Soft,—by and by :—Let me the curtains draw.—Where art thou? What 's the matter with thee now?
[*Unlocks the door.*]

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. O, my good lord, yonder 's foul murthers done.

Oth. What? now?

Emil. But now, my lord!

Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
She comes more nearer earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.

Emil. Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Venetian,
Call'd Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
And Cassio kill'd!

Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd? Then murder 's out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O falsely, falsely murder'd!

Emil. Alas; what cry is that?

Oth. That! what?

Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice:—
Help! help, ho! help!—O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Emil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. Nobody; I myself; farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord. O, farewell. [*Dies.*]

Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd?

Emil. Alas, who knows?

Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emil. She said so: I must needs report the truth.

Oth. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'T was I that kill'd her.

Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

Oth. She was false as water.

Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false; O, she was heavenly true!

Oth. Cassio did top her: ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity: Thy husband knew it all.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Thy husband.

Emil. That she was false to wedlock?

Oth. Ay, with Cassio.
Had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it.

Emil. My husband?

Oth. Ay, 't was he that told me on her first;
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Emil. My husband ?

Oth. What needs this iterance, woman ? I say thy husband.

Emil. O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love !—

My husband say that she was false ?

Oth. He, woman :
I say, thy husband : Dost understand the word ?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day ! he lies to the heart ;
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

Oth. Ha !

Emil. Do thy worst ;
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Oth. Peace, you were the best.

Emil. Thou hast not half that power to do me harm,
As I have to be hurt. O gull ! O dolt !
As ignorant as dirt ! thou hast done a deed,—
I care not for thy sword ; I'll make thee known,
Though I lost twenty lives :—Help ! help ! ho ! help !
The Moor hath kill'd my mistress. Murder ! murder !

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, and IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter !—How now, general ?

Emil. O, are you come, Iago ? you have done well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra. What is the matter ?

Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man :
He says, thou toldst him that his wife was false :
I know thou didst not, thou 'rt not such a villain :
Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago. I told him what I thought ; and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Emil. But did you ever tell him she was false ?

Iago. I did.

Emil. You told a lie ; an odious, damned lie ;

Upon my soul, a lie ; a wicked lie :
She false with Cassio!—Did you say with Cassio ?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress : Go to, charm your tongue.

Emil. I will not charm my tongue ; I am bound to speak ;

My mistress here lies murth'rd in her bed.

All. O heavens forbend !

Emil. And your reports have set the murth'ron.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters ; it is true indeed.

Gra. 'T is a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act !

Emil. Villainy, villainy, villainy !—

I think upon 't,—I think,—I smell 't—(O villainy !—

I thought so then ;—I 'll kill myself for grief.—

O villainy, villainy !

Iago. What, are you mad ? I charge you, get you home.

Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak ;

'T is proper I obey him, but not now :

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. Oh ! Oh ! Oh !

Emil. Nay, lay thee down, and roar :

For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,

That ere did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul !—

I scarce did know you, uncle : there lies your niece,

Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd :

I know this act shows horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemon ! I am glad thy father's dead ;

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief

Shore his old thread in twain : did he live now,

This sight would make him do a desperate turn,

Yea, curse his better angel from his side,

And fall to reprobance.

Oth. 'T is pitiful ; but yet Iago knows,

That she with Cassio hath the act of shame

A thousand times committed ; Cassio confess'd it :

And she did gratify his amorous works
 With that recognizance and pledge of love
 Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand;
 It was a handkerchief, an antique token
 My father gave my mother.

Emil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emil. 'T will out, 't will out!—I hold my peace,
 sir? no;

No, I will speak as liberal as the north;^a
 Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all,
 All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Emil. I will not. [*IAGO offers to stab his wife.*]

Gra. Fie!

Your sword upon a woman?

Emil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou
 speak'st of

I found by fortune, and did give my husband,
 For often with a solemn earnestness,
 (More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle,)
 He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago. Villainous whore!

Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas, I found it,
 And I did give 't my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest.

Emil. By heaven, I do not; I do not, gentlemen:
 O murderous coxcomb! what should such a fool
 Do with so good a wife?

[*IAGO stabs EMIL, then runs out.*]

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven,
 But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!

Gra. The woman falls; sure he has kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay: O, lay me by my mistress' side!

Gra. He's gone, but his wife's kill'd.

Mon. 'T is a notorious villain. Take you this wea-
 pon.

^a *Liberal* is used in the sense of unrestrained—uncontrolled.

Which I have here recover'd from the Moor :
Come, guard the door without ; let him not pass,
But kill him rather ; I 'll after that same villain,
For 't is a damned slave. [Exit Mon.

Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword :—
But why should honour outlive honesty ?
Let it go all.

Emil. What did thy song bode, lady ?
Hark, can'st thou hear me ? I will play the swan,
And die in music ;—" Willow, willow, willow."—
Moor, she was chaste ; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor ;
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true ;
So speaking as I think, alas, I die. [Dies.

Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber,
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper ;—^a
O, here it is :—Uncle, I must come forth.

Gra. If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear ;
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

Oth. Look in upon me then, and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Gra. What is the matter ?

Oth. Behold ! I have a weapon :
A better never did itself sustain
Upon a soldier's thigh : I have seen the day,
That with this little arm, and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop :—But, O vain boast !
Who can control his fate ? 't is not so now.—
Be not afraid though you do see me weapon'd ;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
Do you go back dismay'd ? 't is a lost fear ;
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,

^a *Ice-brook's temper.* The practice of the Spaniards to temper their swords by plunging them, when hot from the forge, into waters of an icy coldness, is noticed by Martial and Justin.

And he retires;—Where should Othello go?—
 Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd wench!
 Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl?
 Even like thy chastity.—
 O cursed, cursed slave!—Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this heavenly sight!
 Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!—
 O Desdemon! dead Desdemon! dead. Oh, oh.

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO, *carried in a chair, and Officers, with* IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

Oth. That 's he that was Othello; here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down towards his feet;—but that 's a fable:

If that thou be'st a devil I cannot kill thee.

[*OTH. wounds* IAGO.]

Lod. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither; I 'd have thee live;
 For, in my sense, 't is happiness to die.

Lod. O thou Othello, that was once so good,
 Fall'n in the practice of a cursed slave,
 What shall be said to thee?

Oth. Why, any thing:
 An honourable murderer, if you will;
 For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy:
 Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

Oth. Ay.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.

Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil,
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body?

Iago. Demand me nothing: what you know, you
know:

From this time forth I never will speak word.

Lod. What? not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not: Here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here, another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Oth. O villain!

Cas. Most heathenish and most gross!

Lod. Now here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that, belike, Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.

Oth. O thou pernicious caitiff!—
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Cas. I found it in my chamber;
And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,—
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: And even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead,—Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us;
Your power and your command is taken off.

And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,—
 If there be any cunning cruelty,
 That can torment him much, and hold him long,
 It shall be his : You shall close prisoner rest,
 Till that the nature of your fault be known
 To the Venetian state :—Come, bring away.

Oth. Soft you ; a word or two, before you go.
 I have done the state some service, and they know 't ;
 No more of that :—I pray you, in your letters,
 When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
 Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,
 Nor set down aught in malice : then must you speak
 Of one that lov'd not wisely, but too well ;
 Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
 Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one, whose hand,
 Like the base Indian,* threw a pearl away,
 Richer than all his tribe ; of one, whose subdu'd eyes,
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,
 Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
 Their medicinable gum : Set you down this :
 And say, besides,—that in Aleppo once,
 Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
 Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
 And smote him—thus. [Stabs himself.]

Lod. O bloody period !

Gra. All that is spoke is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee, ere I kill'd thee ;—No way but
 this,

Killing myself to die upon a kiss. [Dies.]

Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon ;
 For he was great of heart.

* *Judean.* Boswell, in a very sensible note, shows that *tribe* meant in Shakspeare's day *kindred* ; but *base* is used in the sense of ignorant ; and, what is very important, that two poets after Shakspeare have described the *Indians* as casting away jewels of which they knew not the value. The ordinary reading is "*Judean.*"

Lod. O Spartan dog!
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragic loading of this bed; [To IAGO.
This is thy work : the object poisons sight ;—
Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house,
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you.—To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain ;
The time, the place, the torture,—O enforce it !
Myself will straight aboard ; and, to the state,
Thus heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*

END OF OTHELLO.



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE first edition of 'King Lear' was published in 1608; two other editions were published by Butter in the same year. It is remarkable that a play of which three editions were demanded in one year should not have been reprinted till it was collected in the folio of 1623. Whether 'Lear' was piratical, or whether a limited publication was allowed, it is clear, we think, that by some interference the continued publication was stopped.

The text of the folio, in one material respect, differs considerably from that of the quartos. Large passages which are found in the quartos are omitted in the folio: there are, indeed, some lines found in the folio which are not in the quartos, amounting to about fifty. These are scattered passages, not very remarkable when detached, but for the most part essential to the progress of the action or to the development of character. On the other hand, the lines found in the quartos which are not in the folio amount to as many as two hundred and twenty-five; and they comprise one entire scene, and one or two of the most striking connected passages in the drama. It would be easy to account for these omissions, by the assumption that in the folio edition the original play was cut down by the editors; for 'Lear,' without the omissions, is perhaps the longest of Shakspeare's plays, with the exception of 'Hamlet.' But this theory would require us to assume, also, that the additions to the folio

were made by the editors. These comprise several such minute touches as none but the hand of the master could have superadded.

The story of 'Lear' belongs to the popular literature of Europe. It is a pretty episode in the fabulous chronicles of Britain; and whether invented by the monkish historians, or transplanted into our annals from some foreign source, is not very material. In the 'Gesta Romanorum,' the same story is told of Theodosius, "a wise emperor in the city of Rome."

Shelley, in his eloquent 'Defence of Poetry,' published in his 'Posthumous Essays,' &c., has stated the grounds for his belief that the 'Lear' of Shakspeare may sustain a comparison with the master-pieces of the Greek tragedy. "The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy, though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be as in 'King Lear,' universal, ideal, and sublime. It is, perhaps, the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favour of 'King Lear' against the 'Œdipus Tyrannus' or the 'Agamemnon,' or, if you will, the trilogies with which they are connected; unless the intense power of the choral poetry, especially that of the latter, should be considered as restoring the equilibrium. 'King Lear,' if it can sustain that comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world." We can understand this now. But if any writer before the commencement of the present century, and indeed long after, had talked of the comedy of 'Lear' as being "universal, ideal, and sublime," and

had chosen *that* as the excellence to balance against "the intense power of the choral poetry" of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*, he would have been referred to the authority of *Voltaire*, who, in his letter to the Academy, describes such works of *Shakspeare* as forming "an obscure chaos, composed of murders and buffooneries, of heroism and meanness."

In certain schools of criticism, even yet, the notion that '*Lear*' "may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world" would be treated as a mere visionary conceit; and we should still be reminded that *Shakspeare* was a "wild and irregular genius," producing these results because he could not help it. In France are still heard the feeble echoes of the contest between the disciples of the romantic and the classic schools.

Poor *Nahum Tate* did not unfitly represent his age when he said of '*Lear*,' "It is a heap of jewels, unstrung and unpolished, yet so dazzling in their disorder that I soon perceived I had seized a treasure."

There is only one mode in which such a production as the '*Lear*' of *Shakspeare* can be understood — by study, and by reverential reflection. The age which produced the miserable parody of '*Lear*' that till within a few years had banished the '*Lear*' of *Shakspeare* from the stage, was, as far as regards the knowledge of the highest efforts of intellect, a presumptuous, artificial, and therefore empty age. *Tate* was tolerated because *Shakspeare* was not read. We have arrived, in some degree, to a better judgment, because we have learnt to judge more humbly. We have learnt to compare the

highest works of the highest masters of poetry, not by the pedantic principle of considering a modern great only to the extent in which he is an imitator of an ancient, but by endeavouring to comprehend the idea in which the modern and the ancient each worked. The *Cordeha* of Shakspeare and the *Antigone* of Sophocles have many points of similarity, but they each belong to a different system of art. It is for the highest minds only to carry their several systems to an approach to the perfection to which Shakspeare and Sophocles have carried them. It was for the feeblest of imitators, in a feeble age, to produce such parodies as those of Tate, under the pretence of substituting order for irregularity, but in utter ignorance of the principle of order which was too skilfully framed to be viable to the grossness of their taste.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LEAR, *King of Britain.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 4. Act III. sc. 2;
sc. 4; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 6. Act V. sc. 2; sc. 3.*

KING OF FRANCE.

Appears, Act I. sc. 1.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Appears, Act I. sc. 1.

DUKE OF CORNWALL.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4. Act III.
sc. 5; sc. 7.*

DUKE OF ALBANY.

Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 4. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 3.

EARL OF KENT.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 4; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act III.
sc. 1, sc. 2; sc. 4; sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 3; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 3.*

EARL OF GLOSTER.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4. Act III. sc. 2;
sc. 4, sc. 6; sc. 7. Act IV. sc. 1, sc. 6. Act V. sc. 2.*

REGAN, *son to Gloster.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 4;
sc. 6. Act IV. sc. 1; sc. 6. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3.*

EDMUND, *bastard son to Gloster.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 2. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 3. Act III. sc. 3;
sc. 5; sc. 7. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 2.*

CURAN, *a courtier.*

Appears, Act II. sc. 1.

Old Man, *tenant to Gloster.*

Appears, Act IV. sc. 1.

Physician.

Appears, Act IV. sc. 4

Fool.

*Appears, Act I. sc. 4; sc. 5. Act II. sc. 4. Act III. sc. 2;
sc. 4; sc. 6.*

OSWALD, *steward to Goneril.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 3; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 2; sc. 4. Act III.
sc. 7. Act IV. sc. 2; sc. 5; sc. 6.*

An Officer, *employed by Edmund.*

Appears, Act V. sc. 3.

Gentleman, *attendant on Cordelia.*

Appears, Act IV. sc. 7.

A Herald.

Appears, Act V. sc. 3.

Servants to Cornwall.

Appear, Act III. sc. 7.

GONERIL, *daughter to Lear.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1; sc. 3; sc. 4. Act II. sc. 4. Act III.
sc. 7. Act IV. sc. 2. Act V. sc. 1; sc. 3.*

REGAN, *daughter to Lear.*

*Appears, Act I. sc. 1. Act II. sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 4. Act III. sc. 7
Act IV. sc. 5. Act V. sc. 1, sc. 3.*

CORDELIA, *daughter to Lear.*

Appears, Act I. sc. 1. Act IV. sc. 4; sc. 7. Act V. sc. 2, sc. 3.

*Knights attending on the King, Officers, Messengers,
Soldiers, and Attendants.*

SCENE,—BRITAIN.

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—King Lear's Palace.

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, and EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for qualities are so weigh'd, that curiosity^a in neither can make choice of either's moiety.^b

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to't.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother could: whereupon she grew round-womb'd; and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glo. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my ac-

^a Curiosity—exact scrutiny.

^b Moiety. In the same way Hotspur calls his third share a moiety. In both these cases it is used for an assigned proportion.

count: though this knave came somewhat saucily to the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again:—The king is coming. [*Trumpets sound within.*]

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, and Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

Glo. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt GLO. and EDM.*]

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose. Give me the map there.—Know, that we have divided, In three, our kingdom: and 't is our fast intent To shake all cares and business from our age; Conferring them on younger strengths, while we Unburthen'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,

And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters,
(Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state.)

Which of you, shall we say doth love us most?

That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
Our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I love you more than word can wield the
matter,

Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty ;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare ;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour :
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found.
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable ;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. What shall Cordelia speak ? Love, and be
silent. [*Aside.*

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to
this,

With shadowy forests, and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady : To thine and Albany's issues
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall ?

Reg. I am made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love ;
Only she comes too short,—that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses ;
And find, I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Cor. Then poor Cordelia ! [*Aside.*
And yet not so ; since, I am sure, my love's
More ponderous than my tongue.

Lear. To thee, and thine, hereditary ever,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom ;
No less in space, validity,* and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,

* *Validity*—value, worth.

Although our last and least ;^a to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest'd ;^b what can you say, to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak,

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing ?

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing : speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth ; I love your majesty
According to my bond ; no more, nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ? mend your speech a
little,

Lest you may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me : I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you, all ? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care, and duty :
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?

Cor. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so :—Thy truth then be thy dower :
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun ;
The mysteries of Hecate and the night ;

^a We give the text as it stands in the folio, by which we lose the words which have passed into a household phrase, "Although the last not least." But in truth the modern text is not to be found in any edition of Shakspeare.

^b *Interest'd*. This verb, from the French *intéresser*, is used also by Ben Jonson and Massinger.

By all the operation of the orbs,
 From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 Propinquity and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
 Or he that makes his generation messes
 To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
 Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
 As thou, my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath :
 I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
 On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!—

[*To CORDELIA.*

So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 Her father's heart from her!—Call France;—Who
 stirs?

Call Burgundy.—Cornwall and Albany,
 With my two daughters' dowers digest the third :
 Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
 I do invest you jointly with my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty.—(Ourself, by monthly course,
 With reservation of an hundred nights,
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turn. Only we shall retain
 The name, and all the additions to a king ;
 The sway,

Revenue, execution of the rest,
 Beloved sons, be yours : which to confirm,
 This corobet part between you. [*Giving the crown.*

Kent. Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
 Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
 As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart : be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man ?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows ? To plainness honour's
bound,

When majesty falls to folly. Reserve thy state ;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness : answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least ;
Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sounds
Reverb no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies ; ne'er fear to lose it,
Thy safety being motive.

Lear. Out of my sight !

Kent. See better, Lear ; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal ! miscreant !

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]

Alb., Corn. Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Kill thy physician, and thy fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift ;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee, thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant !

On thine allegiance, hear me !—

That thou hast sought to make us break our vows,
(Which we durst never yet,) and, with strain'd pride,
To come betwixt our sentences and our power,
(Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,)

Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee for provision
To shield thee from disasters of the world;
And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death: Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.—
The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid, [To COR.
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!—
And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
[To REGAN and GONERIL.
That good effects may spring from words of love.—
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu:
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [Exit.

Re-enter GLOSTER; with FRANCE, BURGUNDY, and Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
We first address toward you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: What, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n: Sir, there she stands;
If aught within that little, seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir,
Election makes not up in such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that
made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—For you, great king,

[To FRANK]

I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way,
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed
Almost to acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange!
That she, who even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour! Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Should never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,
(If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I'll do 't before I speak,) that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour:
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not t' have pleas'd me better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do?—My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love 's not love,
When it is mingled with regards^a that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal king,
Gave but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being
poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful, I take up what 's cast away.
Gods, gods! 't is strange, that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy
Can buy this unprix'd precious maid of me.—
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou lovest here, a better where^b to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine. *for*
we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see

^a *Regards*; means considerations.

^b *Here and where* are used as nouns.

That face of hers again :—Therefore be gone,
 Without our grace, our love, our benison.
 Come, noble Burgundy. [*Flourish. Exit LEAR,*
BUR., CORN., ALB., GLO., and Attendants.

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
 Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;
 And, like a sister, am most loath to call
 Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father :
 To your profess'd bosoms I commit him :
 But yet, alas ! stood I within his grace,
 I would prefer him to a better place.
 So farewell to you both.

Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.

Gon. Let your study
 Be, to content your lord ; who hath receiv'd you
 At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
 And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides :
 Who covers faults at last with shame derides.
 Well may you prosper !

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exit FRANCE and CORDELIA.*

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say, of what
 most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father
 will hence to-night.

Reg. That 's most certain, and with you ; next month
 with us.

Gon. You see how fulk of changes his age is ; the
 observation we have made of it hath been little : he
 always loved our sister most ; and with what poor judg-
 ment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'T is the infirmity of his age : yet he hath ever
 but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been
 but rash : then must we look from his age to receive not
 alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition, but,

therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let us sit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat. [*Ex.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, with a letter.

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound: Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom; and permit
The curiosity* of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality,
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake?—Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,
As to the legitimate: Fine word,—legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,

* *Curiosity.* In the first scene this word is used in the sense of exact scrutiny; in the passage before us the meaning approaches more nearly to *fastidiousness*.

And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow ; I prosper :—
Now, gods, stand up for bastards !

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus ! and France in choler
parted !

And the king gone to-night ! prescrib'd his power !
Confin'd to exhibition !^a All this done

Upon the gad !—Edmund ! How now ; what news ?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.

[*Putting up the letter.*]

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter ?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading ?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No ? what needed then that terrible despatch of
it into your pocket ? the quality of nothing hath not
such need to hide itself. Let 's see : Come, if it be
nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me : it is a letter
from my brother, that I have not all o'erread : and for
so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'er-
looking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The
contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glo. Let 's see, let 's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote
this but as an essay^b or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*Reads*] " This policy, and reverence of age, makes
the world bitter to the best of our times ; keeps our fortunes
from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find
an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny :

^a *Exhibition*—allowance.

^b *Essay*—*assay*—*say*, signified such proof or examination as
was made by the assayer of coin, or the taster at royal tables.

who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar."

Humph—Conspiracy!

"Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue,"—

My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came you to this? Who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there 's the cunning of it: I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Has he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: But I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declined, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain!—His very opinion in the letter!—Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him:—Abominable villain!—Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you should run a certain course; where,* if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his pur-

* *Where*—in the sense of *whereas*.

pose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence^a of danger.

Glo. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall bear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster.

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth!—Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you; frame the business after your own wisdom: I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey^b the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: Machinations, hollownness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves!—Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully:—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty!—
"T is strange!

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world! that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeit of our

^a Pretence—purpose.

^b Convey—manage.

own behaviour,) we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and stars: as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers,^a by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition on the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *urae major*: so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous.—I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.

Enter EDGAR.

Pat: he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy. My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam.—O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund? What serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come, when saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

^a *Treachers*. Treacher is the French *trickster*, a trickster, a cheat.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word, or countenance?

• *Edg.* None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence, till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you have a continent forbearance, till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: Pray you, go; there's my key:—If you do stir abroad go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best. I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you: I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.— [*Exit EDM.*
A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy!—I see the business.—
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL and Steward.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; a every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
(On every trifle:—When he returns from hunting
I will not speak with him; say, I am sick:—
If you come slack of former services
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Stew. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

[*Horns within.*]

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please.
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
If he distaste it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away!—Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd
With checks, as flatteries,—when they are seen abus'd.
Remember what I have said.

Stew. Well, madam

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among
you; what grows of it no matter; advise your fellows
so: I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall
that I may speak:—I'll write straight to my sister, to
hold my course:—Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the same.*

Enter KENT, disguised.

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I ras'd my likeness.—Now, banish'd Kent,

* We think with Stevens that, in the passage before us, by
day and night means always,—every way,—constantly.

If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights, and Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for diuner; go, get it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now, what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? What wouldst thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he's for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly; that which ordinary men are fit for I am qualified in: and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for sing-

ing, nor so old to dote on her for anything: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me; if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet.—Dinner, ho, dinner.—Where's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither.

Enter Steward.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Stew. So please you,—

[*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.—Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.—How now? where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answer'd me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears, as well in the general dependants, as in the duke himself also, and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken: for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity, than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.—Go you, call hither my fool.—

Re-enter Steward.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: Who am I, sir?

Stew. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father! my lord's knave: you whore-son dog! you slave! you cur!

Stew. I am none of these, my lord: I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Striking him.*]

Stew. I'll not be stricken, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither; you base foot-ball player
[*Tripping up his heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou serv'st me, and I'll love thee

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away; I'll teach you differences; away, away: If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away: go to; Have you wisdom? no.
[*Pushes the Steward out.*]

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service.
[*Giving KENT money.*]

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him, too;—Here's my coxcomb.

[*Giving KENT his cap.*]

Lear. How now, my pretty knave? how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. Why? For taking one's part that's out of favour: Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou 'lt catch cold shortly: There, take my coxcomb: Why, this fellow has banish'd two of his daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb.—How now,

nuncle? 'Would I had two coxcombs, and two daughters'

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living,^a I 'd keep my coxcombs myself: There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipp'd out, when the lady brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:—

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,^b
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 't is like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't: Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. Prithee tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to; he will not believe a fool. [To KENT]

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet one?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

^a *Living*—estate, means of living.

^b *Overt*—ownest.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee to give away thy land,

Come place him here by me, do thou for him stand :
The sweet and bitter fool will presently appear ;
The one in motley here—the other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy ?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away ; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, 'faith, lords and great men will not let me ;
if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on 't :
and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to
myself ; they 'll be snatching.—Nuncle, give me an egg,
and I 'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be ?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle,
and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When
thou clovest thy crown i' the middle, and gavest away
both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back o'er the
dirt : Thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when
thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like my-
self in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so.

“ Fools had ne'er less grace in a year ; [Singing.
For wise men are grown foppish ;
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.”

Lear. When were you wout to be so full of songs,
sirrah ?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, e'er since thou madest
thy daughters thy mothers ; for when thou gav'st them
the rod, and putt'st down thine own breeches,

“ Then they for sudden joy did weep, [Singing.
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fool among.”

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy
fool to lie ; I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we 'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they 'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou 'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and sometimes I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind of thing than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast par'd thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing in the middle: Here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter? what makes that frontlet on? Methinks, you are too much of late i' the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure: I am better than thou art now: I am a fool, thou art nothing.—Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face [*to GON.*] bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,

Weary of all, shall want some.—

That 's a sheal'd peascod. [*Pointing to LEAR.*]

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which, if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep;
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you know, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.
So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would you would make use of your good
wisdom

Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions, which of late transport you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the
horse?—Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear:
Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his
eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied. Ha! waking? 't is not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?—

Fool. Lear's shadow.—

Lear. I would learn that; for by the marks of sove-
reignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false per-
suaded I had daughters—

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:

As you are old and reverend, should be wise:
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel,
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: Be then desir'd
By her that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,

To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—

Saddle my horses; call my train together.—

Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee;

Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd
rabble

Make servants of their betters.

Enter Albany

Lear Woe, that too late repents,—O, sir, are you
come?

Is it your will? [*To Albany*] Speak, sir—Prepare my
horses

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. Detested kite! thou liest: [*To Gon.*

My train are men of choice and rarest parts,

That all particulars of duty know:

And in the most exact regard support

The worship of their name—O most small fault,

How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!

Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature

From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,

And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!

Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,

[*Striking his head.*

And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go my people.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant

Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord,—

Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!

Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend

To make this creature fruitful!

Into her womb convey sterility !
 Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
 And from her derogate body never spring
 A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,
 Create her child of spleen ; that it may live,
 And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her !
 Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
 With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks ;
 Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits,
 To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
 To have a thankless child.—Away, away ! . [Exit.
Alb. Now, gods, that we adore, whereof comes this ?
Gon. Never afflict yourself to know more of it ;
 But let his disposition have that scope
 As dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap .
 Within a fortnight ?

Alb. What 's the matter, sir ?

Lear. I 'll tell thee ;—Life and death ! I am asham'd
 That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus :

[To *Gon.*
 That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
 Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs upon
 thee !

The untented woundings of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee ! Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again I 'll pluck ye out :
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay.—Ha ! Let it be so :—
 I have another daughter,
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable ;
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
 She 'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,
 That I 'll resume the shape which thou dost think

I have cast off for ever.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, KENT, and Attendants.]

Gon. Do you mark that?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,

To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. Pray you content.—What, Oswald, ho!

You, sir, more knave than-fool, after your master.

[*To the Fool.*]

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry; take the fool with thee.

A fox when one has caught her,

And such a daughter,

Should sure to the slaughter,

If my cap would buy a halter;

So the fool follows after.

[*Exit.*]

Gon. This man hath had good counsel :—A hundred knights!

'T is politic, and safe, to let him keep

At point a hundred knights! Yes, that on every dream,

Each buz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,

He may enguard his dotage with their powers,

And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say!—

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far.

Let me still take away the harms I fear,

Not fear still to be taken. I know his heart:

What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister;

If she sustain him and his hundred knights,

When I have show'd the unfitness — How now,

Oswald?

[*Enter Steward.*]

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:

Inform her full of my particular fear;

And thereto add such reasons of your own,

As may compact it more. Get you gone ;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Stew.*] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness, and course of yours,
Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attack'd for want of wisdom,
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell ;
Striving to better, oft we mar what 's well.

Gon. Nay, then,—

Alb. Well, well ; the event. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Court before the same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these letters :
acquaint my daughter no further with anything you
know, than comes from her demand out of the letter :
If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore
you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered
your letter. [*Exit*]

Fool. If a man's brains were in his heels, were 't not
in danger of kibes ?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry ; thy wit shall not
go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha !

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee
kindly : for though she 's as like this as a crab 's like
an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. What canst tell, boy ?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a
crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the
middle of one's face ?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side one's nose ;
that what a man cannot smell out he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong :—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell ?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither ; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why ?

Fool. Why, to put his head in ; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature.—So kind a father !—
Be my horses ready ?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight ?

Fool. Yes, indeed : Thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take it again perforce !—Monster ingratitude !

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I 'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How 's that ?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven !
Keep me in temper ; I would not be mad !

Enter Gentleman.

How now ! are the horses ready ?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that 's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Court within the Castle of the Earl of Gloster.*

Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father; and given him notice that the duke of Cornwall, and Regan his duchess, will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not: You have heard of the news abroad; I mean, the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I. 'Pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do then, in time. Fare you well, sir. *[Exit.]*

Edm. The duke be here to-night! The better, best! This weaves itself perforce into my business! My father hath set guard to take my brother; And I have one thing, of a queazy^a question, Which I must act:—Briefness, and fortune, work!—Brother, a word;—descend:—Brother, I say;

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches:—O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:—
Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,

^a *Queazy.* This is explained as delicate, uncertain. *Ticklish* perhaps gives the meaning more clearly.

And Regan with him : Have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on 't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming,—Pardon me :—
In cunning, I must draw my sword upon you :—
Draw : Seem to defend yourself : Now quit you well.
Yield : come before my father ;—Light, ho, here !—
Fly, brother ;—Torches ! torches !—So, farewell.—

[*Exit EDMUND.*]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion

[*Wounds his arm.*]

Of my more fierce endeavour : I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport.—Father ! father !
Stop, stop ! No help ?

Enter GLOSTER and Servants with torches.

Glo. Now, Edmund, where 's the villain ?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbl'ing of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand his auspicious mistress :—

Glo. But where is he ?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund ?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he
could—

Glo. Pursue him, ho !—Go after.—[*Exit SERV.*]

By no means,—what ?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship ;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all the thunder bend ;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father :—Sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With my prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, launch'd^a mine arm :

^a *Launch'd*—meaning *launc'd*.

And when he saw my best alarm'd spirits,
 Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,
 Or whether ghasted by the noise I made,
 Full suddenly he fled.

Glo. Let him fly far;
 Not in this land shall he remain uncaught:
 And found—Despatch.—The noble duke my master,
 My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
 By his authority I will proclaim it,
 That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
 Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
 He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
 And found him pight^a to do it, with curst speech
 I threaten'd to discover him: He replied,
 "Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
 If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
 Of any trust, virtue, or worth, in thee
 Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny
 (As this I would: ay, though thou didst produce
 My very character,^b) I'd turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
 And thou must make a dullard of the world,
 If they not thought the profits of my death
 Were very pregnant and potential spurs
 To make thee seek it."

Glo. O strange and fasten'd villain!
 Would he deny his letter, said he?—I never got him.

[*Trumpets within.*]

Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not wher'^c he
 comes:

All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
 The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
 I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
 May have due note of him; and of my land,

^a *Pight*—settled, pitched. ^b *Character*—hand writing.

^c *Wher'*—wherefore.

Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, and Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend ? since I came
hither,
(Which I can call but now,) I have heard strange
news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord ?

Glo. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd ; it's
crack'd !

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life !
He whom my father nam'd ? your Edgar ?

Glo. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid !

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tended upon my father ?

Glo. I know not, madam : it is too bad, too bad.—

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel then though he were ill affected ;
'T is they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th' expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them ; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house
I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.

Edm. It was my duty, sir.

Glo. He did bewray ^a his practice ; and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued ?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm : make your own purpose,

^a *Bewray*—reveal.

How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours ;
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need ;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glo. For him I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—

Reg. Thus out of season ; threading dark-ey'd night,
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poize,
Wherein we must have use of your advice :—
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home ; the several messengers
From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom ; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our businesses,
Which craves the instant use.

Glo. I serve you, madam :
Your graces are right welcome. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Before Gloster's Castle.*

Enter KENT and Steward, severally.

Stew. Good dawning to thee, friend : Art of this house ?

Kent. Ay.

Stew. Where may we set our horses ?

Kent. I' the mire.

Stew. Prithee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Stew. Why, then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pincfold, I would
make thee care for me.

Stew. Why dost thou use me thus ? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Stew. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking, whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pander, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deny'st the least syllable of thy addition.*

Stew. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee.

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou know'st me? Is it two days since I tripp'd up thy heels, and beat thee, before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger. Draw. [*Drawing his sword.*]

Stew. Away; I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king, and take vanity the puppet's part, against the royalty of her father: Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks:—draw, you rascal: come your ways.

Stew. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue; stand, you neat slave; strike. [*Beating him.*]

Stew. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND, CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.

Edm. How now! What's the matter? Part.

* The description of an individual in a legal document is called his *addition*.

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please ; come, I'll flesh you ; come on, young master.

Glo. Weapons ! arms ! What's the matter here ?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives ;
He dies that strikes again : What is the matter ?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference ? speak.

Stew. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour.
You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee ; a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow : a tailor make a man ?

Kent. A tailor, sir, a stone-cutter, or a painter, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours at the trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel ?

Stew. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd,

At suit of his grey beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed ! thou unnecessary letter !
—My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him.—Spare my grey beard, you wagtail ?

Corn. Peace, sirrah !

You beastly knave, know you no reverence ?

Kent. Yes, sir ; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry ?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain
Which are too intrinse^a t' unloose : smooth every
passion

That in the natures of their lords rebels ;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods ;

^a *Intrinsic*—closely tied.

Renegé,^a affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks^b
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow!

Glo.

How fell you out?

Say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What is his
fault?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, or his, or
hers.

Kent. Sir, 't is my occupation to be plain;
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: He cannot flatter, he!—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth:
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
Than twenty silly ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,

^a *Renegé*—to deny.

^b *Halcyon beaks.* The halcyon is the kingfisher; and there
was a popular opinion that the bird, if hung up, would indicate
by the turning of its beak the point from which the wind blew.

Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front,—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you, in a plain accent, was a plain knave: which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to it.

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Stew. I never gave him any.

It pleas'd the king his master, very late,
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, compact,^a and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind: being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthy'd him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards,
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverent braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respects, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks:
As I have life and honour, there shall he sit till noon

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night
too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

^a *Compact*—in the sense of confederate.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.
[*Stocks brought out*

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of:—Come, bring away the stocks.

Glo. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for 't: your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemn'd 'st wretches,
For pilferings and most common trespasses,
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs.—Put in his legs.—

[*Kent is put in the stocks.*
Come, my lord; away. [*Exeunt REG. and CORN.*

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend; 't is the duke's
pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I have watch'd, and tra-
vell'd hard;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.

A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:

Give you good morrow!

Glo. The duke 's to blame in this; 't will be ill
taken. [*Exit.*

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common
saw;

Thou out of heaven's benediction 'com'st
To the warm sun!^a

^a The common saw alluded to is found in Heywood's 'Dialogues and Proverbs':—

"In your running from him to me,
Ye run out of God's blessing into the warm sun."

Approach, thou beacon to this underglobe,
 That by thy comfortable beams I may
 Peruse this letter!—Nothing almost sees miracles,
 But misery :—I know 't is from Cordelia;
 Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
 Of my obscured course; and shall find time
 From this enormous state,—seeking to give
 Losses their remedies :—All weary and o'erwatch'd,
 Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
 This shameful lodging.
 Fortune, good night; smile once more; turn thy wheel!
[He sleeps.]

SCENE III.—*A part of the Heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
 And, by the happy hollow of a tree,
 Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
 That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
 Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,
 I will preserve myself: and am bethought
 To take the basest and most poorest shape,
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,
 Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
 Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
 And with presented nakedness out-face
 The winds and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
 Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting^a villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
 Sometime with lunatic bans,^b sometime with prayers,

^a *Pelting*—petty, of little worth.

^b *Bans*—curses.

Enforce their charity.—Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That 's something yet;—Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*Before Gloster's Castle.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, and Gentleman.

Lear. 'T is strange, that they should so depart from
home,
And not send back my messenger.

Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!

Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha; he wears cruel garters! Horses are
tied by the heads; dogs and bears by the neck; monkeys
by the loins; and men by the legs: when a man is
over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.^a

Lear. What 's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no; they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have.

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't; 't is worse than
murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:

^a *Nether-stocks*—stockings.

Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress, salutations ;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read : on those contents
They summon'd up their meiny,^a straight took horse ;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine,
(Being the very fellow which of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,)
Having more man than wit about me, drew ;^b
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries :
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags do make their children blind ;
But fathers that bear bags shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that aunt who's ne'er turns the key to the
poor.—

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours^c for
thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart !
Hysterica passio !—down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element 's below !—where is this daughter ?

^a *Meiny*—retinue, attendants—hence the adjective menial.

^b *Drew*. The personal pronoun *I* is understood before *drew*.

^c *Dolours*. There is a quibble here between *dolours* and *dollars*.

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not ;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of ?

Kent. None.

How chance the king comes with so small a number ?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool ?

Fool. We 'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there 's no labouring in the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes, but blind men ; and there 's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that 's stinking. Let go thy hold, when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following ; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again : I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,

And follows but for form,

Will pack, when it begins to rain,

And leave thee in the storm.

But I will tarry ; the fool will stay,

And let the wise man fly :

The knave turns fool that runs away ;

The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, fool ?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, with GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me ? They are sick ? they are weary ?

They have travell'd all the night ? Mere fetches ;

The images of revolt and flying off !

Fetch me a better answer.

Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? what quality? why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me,
man?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the
dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands, tends, ser-
vice:

Are they inform'd of this?—My breath and blood!—

Fiery! the fiery duke!—Tell the hot duke, that—

No, but not yet:—may be, he is not well:

Infirmary doth still neglect all office,

Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves,

When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind

To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;

And am fallen out with my more headier will,

To take the indispos'd and sickly fit

For the sound man.—Death on my state! wherefore

[*Looking on KENT.*

Should he sit here? This act persuades me,

That this remotion of the duke and her

Is practice only. Give me my servant forth:

Go, tell the duke and his wife, I'd speak with them,

Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,

(Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,

Till it cry sleep to death.*

* *Till it cry sleep to death.* We point this passage as in the original copies. It is given in all the modern editions "till it cry—*Sleep to death*"—as if the drum said, sleep to death. Tuck suggested the true explanation—till the noise of the drum

Glo. I'd have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart!—but, down.

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels, when she put them i' the paste alive; she knapp'd 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cry'd, "Down, wantons, down:" 'T was her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, butter'd his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace!
[*KENT is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason I have to think so; if thou shouldst not be glad, I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, Sepulch'ring an adultress.—O, are you free?

[*To KENT.*
 Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,
 Thy sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
 Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here,—

[*Points to his heart.*
 I can scarce speak to thee: thou 'lt not believe,
 With how depriv'd a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience; I have hope
 You less know how to value her desert,
 Than she to scant her duty.*

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
 Would fail her obligation: If, sir, perchance,
 She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,

has been the death of sleep—has destroyed sleep—has forced them to awaken.

* The construction here is involved, but the meaning is evident. You less know how to value her desert than she knows to scant her duty.

'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her !

Reg. O, sir, you are old ;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine : you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself : Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return :
Say, you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness ?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house ?
" Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;
Age is unnecessary : on my knees I beg,
That you 'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."

Reg. Good sir, no more ; these are unsightly tricks :
Return you to my sister.

Lear. Never, Regan :
She hath abated me of half my train ;
Look'd black upon me ; strook me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart :—
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top ! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness !

Corn. Fye, sir, fye !

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding
flames
Into her scornful eyes ! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blister.

Reg. O the blest gods !
So will you wish on me, when the rash mood 's on.

^a *The house.* Capell says, " This is one of the lines that mark Shakspeare *the house* is an expression worthy his genius : fathers are not the heads only of a house or a family, but its representatives ; they are *the house*, what affects them affects the rest of its body."

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse ;
Thy tender-hefted^a nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness ; her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort, and not burn : 'T is not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,^b
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in : thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg.

Good sir, to the purpose.

[*Trumpets within.*]

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks ?

Corn.

What trumpet 's that ?

Enter Steward.

Reg. I know 't, my sister's : this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.—Is your lady come ?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows :—
Out, varlet, from my sight !

Corn.

What means your grace ?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have good
hope

Thou didst not know on 't. — Who comes here ? O,
heavens,

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if you yourselves are old,

^a *Tender-hefted.* *Heft—haft*, is that which is *haved—held* ;
and thus, thy *tender-hefted* nature may be thy nature which may
be held by tenderness.

^b *Sizes—allowances.* A *sizar* in a college is one to whom
certain *sizes* or portions are allowed.

Make it your cause ; send down, and take my part !—
Art not ashamed to look upon this beard ?—

[To GONERIL.

O, Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir ? How have I offended ?

All 's not offence that indiscretion finds,
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O, sides, you are too tough !

Will you yet hold ?—How came my man i' the stocks ?

Corn. I set him there, sir : but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You ! did you ?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.

If, till the expiration of your month,

You will return and sojourn with my sister,

Dismissing half your train, come then to me ;

I am now from home, and out of that provision

Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd ?

No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose

To wage against the enmity o' the air ;

To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—

Necessity's sharp pinch !—Return with her ?

Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took

Our youngest born, I could as well be brought

To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg

To keep base life afoot :—Return with her ?

Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter

To this detested groom. [Looking on the Steward.

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad ;

I will not trouble thee, my child ; farewell :

We 'll no more meet, no more see one another :—

But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter ;

(Or, rather, a disease that 's in my flesh,

Which I must needs call mine ; thou art a boil,

A plague-sore, or embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it :
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove :
Mend, when thou canst ; be better, at thy leisure :
I can be patient ; I can stay with Regan,
I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Not altogether so ;
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For you fit welcome : Give ear, sir, to my sister ;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken ?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir : What, fifty followers ?
Is it not well ? What should you need of more ?
Yea, or so many ? sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number ? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity ? 'T is hard ; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine ?

Reg. Why not, my lord ? If then they chanc'd to
slack you,
We could control them : If you will come to me,
(For now I spy a danger.) I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty ; to no more
Will I give place, or notice.

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries ;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number : What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty, Regan ? said you so ?

Reg. And speak 't again, my lord ; no more with
me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd!

When others are more wicked, not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise:—I'll go with thee;

[*To GONERIL.*

Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord;
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need,—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger!
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things—
What they are yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:—
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,^a
Or ere I'll weep:—O, fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, and Fool.*

^a *Flaw.* Douce conjectures that *flaw* might signify a *fragment* in Shakspeare's time, as well as a *crack*.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 't will be a storm.

[*Storm heard at a distance.*]

Reg. This house is little; the old man and his people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'T is his own blame; hath put himself^a from
rest,

And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I 'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my lord of Gloster?

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth :—he is return'd.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'T is best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glo. Alack, the night comes on, and the high winds
Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There 's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters: Shut up your doors;
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 't is a wild
night:
My Regan counsels well: come out o' the storm.

[*Exeunt.*]

^a *Hath put himself.* The personal pronoun *he* is understood.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Heath.*

A storm is heard, with thunder and lightning.

Enter KENT and a Gentleman, meeting.

Kent. Who 's there, besides foul weather?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you. Where 's the king?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements;

Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,

Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,^a

That things might change, or cease: tears his white
hair;

Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,

Catch in their fury, and make nothing of:

Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn

The to-and-fro conflicting wind and rain.

This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,

The lion and the belly-pinched wolf

Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,

And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool; who labours to out-jest
His heart-strook injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,^b
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have (as who have not, that their great stars

^a *The main* is here used for the main land.

^b *Note*—knowledge.

Thron'd and set high?) servants, who seem no less;
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs ^a and packings ^b of the dukes;
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof, perchance, these are but furuishings;
But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner.—Now to you:
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent. No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains: If you shall see Cordelia,
(As fear not but you shall,) show her this ring;
And she will tell you who that fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fye on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand: Have you no more to
say?

Kent. Few words, but to effect more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king, (in which your pain
That way: I'll this:) he that first lights on him,
Holla the other.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

^a Snuffs—dislikes.

^b Packings—intrigues.

SCENE II.—*Another Part of the Heath.**Storm continues.**Enter LEAR and Fool.*

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage!
blow!

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt couriers of oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens^a spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is
better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle,
in; ask thy daughters' blessing; here 's a night pities
neither wise men nor fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyfull! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness,
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription; then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:—
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high engender'd battles, 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 't is foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put his head in, has a
good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house,
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse;—
So beggars marry many.

^a *Germens*—seeds of matter.

The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make,
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.
—for there was never yet fair woman but she made
mouths in a glass.

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience, I
will say nothing.

Kent. Who 's there?

Fool. Marry, here 's grace and a cod-piece : that 's a
wise man, and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow* the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves : since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard : man's nature cannot carry
The affliction, nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder^b o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice : Hide thee, thou bloody hand ;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular^c of virtue,
Thou art incestuous : Câtiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life !—Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace.—I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

^a *Gallow*—scare.

^b *Pudder*. This is always modernized into *pother* ; the same
word, doubtless, but somewhat vulgarized by the change.

^c *Simular*—counterfeit.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed !
 Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel ;
 Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest ;
 Repose you there : while I to this hard house
 (More harder than the stones whereof 't is rais'd :
 Which even but now, demanding after you,
 Denied me to come in) return and force
 Their scantied courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.—
 Come on, my boy : How dost, my boy ? Art cold ?
 I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow ?
 The art of our necessities is strange,
 And can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel :
 Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
 That 's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. [*Singing.*] He that has and a little tiny wit,—
 With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain,—
 Must make content with his fortunes fit,
 Though the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel.

[*Exeunt LEAR and KENT.*]

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.—
 I 'll speak a prophecy ere I go.

When priests are more in word than matter ;
 When brewers mar their malt with water ;
 When nobles are their tailors' tutors ;
 No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors ;
 When every case in law is right ;
 No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;
 When slanders do not live in tongues ;
 Nor cutpurses come not to throngs ;
 When usurers tell their gold i' the field ;
 And bawds and whores do churches build ;—
 Then shall the realm of Albion
 Come to great confusion.
 Then comes the time, who lives to see 't,
 That going shall be us'd with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make : for I live before his time. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Room in Gloucester's Castle.*

Enter GLOSTER and EDMUND

Glo. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing : When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house ; charged me, on pain of perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, or any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural !

Glo. Go to ; say you nothing : There is division between the dukes ; and a worse matter than that : I have received a letter this night ;— it is dangerous to be spoken ;—I have lock'd the letter in my closet : these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home ; there is part of a power already footed : we must incline to the king. I will look him, and privily relieve him ; go you, and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived : If he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is strange things toward, Edmund ; pray you, be careful. [Exit.

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke instantly know ; and of that letter too :— This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me That which my father loses ; no less than all : The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—*A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord ; good my lord, enter :

The tyranny of the open night 's too rough
For nature to endure.

[Storm still.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I 'd rather break mine own: Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 't is much, that this contentious storm

Invades us to the skin: so 't is to thee;

But where the greater malady is fix'd,

The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'dst shun a bear,

But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,

Thou 'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind 's
flee

The body 's delicate: the tempest in my mind

Doth from my senses take all feeling else,

Save what beats there.—Filial ingratitude!

Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand,

For lifting food to 't?—But I will punish home:—

No, I will weep no more.—In such a night

To shut me out!—Pour on: I will endure:—

In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!—

Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—

O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;

No more of that,—

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease;

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder

On things would hurt me more.—But I 'll go in:

In, boy; go first.—[*To the Fool.*] You houseless
poverty,—

Nay, get thee in. I 'll pray, and then I 'll sleep.—

[*Fool goes in.*]

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,

That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,

How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,

Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you

From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en

Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;
That thou mayst shake the superfluous to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fathom and half, fathom and half!
Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*]

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit.
Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit; he says his name's poor
Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the
straw?

Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, disguised as a madman.

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!—
Through the sharp hawthorn blow the winds.—
Humph! go to thy bed and warm thee.

Lear. Didst thou give all to thy daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to Poor Tom? whom the
foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame,
through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire;
that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in
his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud
of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched
bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor:—Bless
thy five wits! Tom's a-cold.—O, do de, do de, do de.
—Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking!^a
Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes:
There could I have him now,—and there,—and there
again, and there. [*Storm continues.*]

Lear. Have his daughters brought him to this pass?—
Couldst thou save nothing? Wouldst thou give them
all?

^a *Taking*—malignant influence.

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air Hang fated o'er men's faults, light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature

To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.—

Is it the fashion that discarded fathers

Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?

Judicious punishment! 't was this flesh begot

Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on pillicock-hill;—

Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. Thus cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend: Obey thy parents; keep thy word's justice; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array: Tom 's a-cold

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving man,^a proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one, that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it: Wine loved I dearly; dice dearly; and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman: Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.—

^a *A serving man.* This is not a menial, but a *servant* in the sense in which it is used in the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona':—

"Too low a mistress for so high a servant."—

Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: Says
suum, mun, nonny, dolphin my boy, boy, Sesey;^a let
him trot by. [*Storm still continues.*]

Lear. Thou wert better in a grave, than to answer
with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies.—Is
man no more than this? Consider him well: Thou owest
the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool,
the cat no perfume:—Ha! here 's three of us are sophis-
ticated!—Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated
man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal
as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings:—Come; unbutton
here.— [*Tearing off his clothes.*]

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 't is a naughty
night to swim in.—Now a little fire in a wild field were
like an old lecher's heart,—a small spark, all the rest
of his body cold.—Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edy. This is the foul fiend Philbertigibbet: he begins
at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the
web and the pin,^b squints the eye, and makes the hare-
lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor crea-
ture of earth.

Swithold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
 Bid her alight,
 And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!^d

^a *Sesey.* The quartos read *cease*. It is probably the same word as *sessa*, which is used by Christopher Sly in the 'Taming of the Shrew.' The whole of this passage is probably meant to be unintelligible.

^b *The web and the pin.* Florio, in his 'New World of Words,' (1611,) interprets the Italian (*cataritta*) "A dimness of sight occasioned by humours hardened in the eyes, called a cataract, or a pin and a web."

^c *The old.—The wold.* Spelman writes, Burton upon *Olds*—*Swithold*. The reading of all the old editions is an abbreviation of *Saint Withold*, which is the modern reading.

^d *Aroint.* It is conjectured that it is a compound of *ar*, or *aer*, and *hynt*: the first a very ancient word, common to the

Kent. How fares your grace?

Enter GLOSTER, with a torch.

Lear. What 's he?

Kent. Who 's there? What is 't you seek?

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water;^b that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat, and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing-pool; who is whipped from tything to tything, and stocked, punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear:

But mice, and rats, and such small deer,

Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower:—Peace, Smolkin; peace, thou fiend!

Glo. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman;

Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me; my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands;
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you;
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Greek and Gothic languages in the sense of to *go*; the second derived from the Gothic, and still in common use under the same form and with the same meaning, *hind*, *behind*, &c., in English, and *hint*, or *hynt*, in German.

^a *The wall-newt and the water*—that is, the wall-newt and the water-newt. It is the same form of construction as "a wise man and a merry."

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher :—
What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer ;
Go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban :—
What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord ;
His wits begin to unsettle.

Glo. Canst thou blame him ?
His daughters seek his death :—Ah ! that good Kent !—
He said it would be thus :—Poor banish'd man !—
Thou say'st the king grows mad ; I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself : I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood : he sought my life,
But lately, very late ; I lov'd him, friend,—
No father his son dearer : true to tell thee,

[*Storm continues.*]

The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night 's this !
I do beseech your grace,—

Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.
Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom 's a-cold.

Glo. In, fellow, there, into the hovel : keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let 's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him ;
I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him ; let him take the fellow.

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on ; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words :
Hush.

Edg. Childe Rowland to the dark tower came;
His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A Room in Gloster's Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter which he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—*A Chamber in Out-building adjoining the Castle.*

Enter GLOSTER and KENT.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thank-

fully : I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can : I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience :—The gods reward your kindness !

[*Exit GLOSTER.*]

*Enter LEAR, EDGAR, and Fool.**

Edg. Frateretto calls me ; and tells me, Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithce, nuncle, tell me, whether a madman be a gentleman, or a yeoman ?

Lear. A king, a king !

Fool. No ; he 's a yeoman, that has a gentleman to his son ; for he 's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits Come hissing in upon them :—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He 's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done, I will arraign them straight :— Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer ;—

[*To EDGAR.*
Thou sapient sir, sit here. [*To the Fool.*—Now, ye she foxes !—

Edg. Look where she stands and glares !— Wantonest thou eyes at trial, madam ?

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me :—

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two

* We print the direction for the entrances of the characters as in the folio. In the modern editions they are all brought in when the scene opens.

white herrings. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd : Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first:—Bring in the evidence.—Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;— [*To EDG.* And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, [*To the Fool.* Bench by his side :—You are of the commission, Sit you too. [*To KENT.*

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,

Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is grey.

Lear. Arraign her first; 't is Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim

What store her heart is made of.—Stop her there!

Arms, arms, sword, fire!—Corruption in the place!

False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity!—Sir, where is the patience now, That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much, They'll mar my counterfeiting. [*Aside.*

Lear. The little dogs and all,

Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them.—Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,

Tooth that poisons if it bite;

Mastiff, grey-hound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach^a or lym;^b
Or bobtail tike,^c or trundle-tail;
Tom will make him weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de de. Sese. Come, march to wakes and fairs,
and market towns:—Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what
breeds about her heart: Is there any cause in nature
that makes these hard hearts?—You, sir, I entertain for
one of my hundred; only, I do not like the fashion of
your garments: you will say they are Persian; but let
them be changed. [To EDGAR.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the cur-
tains: So, so: We'll go to supper i' the morning.

fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend: Where is the king my
master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are
gone.

Glo. Good friend, I prithee take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master;
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss: Take up, take up;

^a *Brach*—a female harrier.

^b *Lym*—limmer—leamer, a hunting dog, so called from the
leme or leach in which he was held till he was let slip.

^c *Tike*, according to Steevens, was the Runic word for a
worthless dog.

And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quit conduct.

Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps :—
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure.—Come, help to bear thy master ;
Thou must not stay behind. [*To the Fool.*

Glo. Come, come away.
[*Exeunt KENT, GLOSTER, and the Fool, bearing off
the KING.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' the mind ;
Leaving free things, and happy shows, behind :
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that, which makes me bend, makes the king bow :
He childed, as I father'd !—Tom away :
Mark the high noises : and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
In thy just proof, repeals, and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe scape the king !
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.—*A Room in Gloster's Castle.*

*Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, and
Servants.*

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband ; show
him this letter :—the army of France is landed :—Seek
out the traitor Gloster. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund,
keep you our sister company ; the revenges we are
bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for

your beholding. Advise the duke where you are going, to a most testinate preparation; we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister;—farewell, my lord of Gloster.

Enter Steward.

How now? Where's the king?

Stew. My lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence: Some five or six-and-thirty of his knights, Hot questrists after him, met him at gate; Who, with some other of the lord's dependents, Are gone with him toward Dover; where they boast To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[Exeunt GONERIL and EDMUND.]

Corn. Edmund, farewell,—Go, seek the traitor Gloster,

Punish him like a thief, bring him before us:

[Exeunt other Servants.]

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who's there? The
traitor?

Re-enter Servants, with GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 't is he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glo. What mean your graces?—Good my friends, consider

You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

Corn. Bind him, I say. *[Servants bind him.]*

Reg. Hard, hard:—O filthy traitor!

Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Corn. To this chair bind him:—Villain, thou shalt find—
[REGAN plucks his beard.]

Glo. By the kind gods, 't is most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor !

Glo. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee : I am your host ;
With robbers' hands, my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do ?

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from
France ?

Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the
traitors
Late footed in the kingdom ?

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king ?
Speak.

Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that 's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.

Corn. Cunning.

Reg. And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the king ?

Glo. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover ? Wast thou not charg'd at
peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover ? Let him answer that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the
course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover ?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes ; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires : yet, poor old heart,
He help the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,

Thou shouldst have said, "Good porter, turn the key;"
All cruels else subscrib'd;—But I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See't, shalt thou never:—Fellows, hold the
chair:—

Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Glo. He that will think to live till he be old

Give me some help: O cruel! O ye gods!

Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance,—

Serv. Hold your hand, my lord;

I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;

But better service have I never done you

Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog?

Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,

I'd shake it on this quanel: What do you mean?

Corn. My villain! [*Draws and runs at him.*]

Serv. Nay, then come on, and take the chance of
anger.

[*Draws. They fight. CORNWALL is wounded.*]

Reg. Give me thy sword.—[*To another Servant.*] A
peasant stand up thus!

[*Snatches a sword, comes behind, and stabs him.*]

Serv. O, I am slain!—My lord, you have one eye
left

To see some mischief on him:—O! [*Dies.*]

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it:—Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?

Glo. All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son
Edmund?

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain!

Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.

Glo.

O my follies !

Then Edgar was abus'd.—

Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him !

Reg. Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.—How 'st, my lord ? How look you ?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt :—Follow me, lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain ;—throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace :
Untimely comes this hurt : Give me your arm.
[*Exit CORNWALL, led by REGAN ;—Servants unbind*
GLOSTER, and lead him out.

1 Serv. I 'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

2 Serv. If she live long,
And, in the end, meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

1 Serv. Let 's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would ; his roguish madness
Allows itself to anything.

2 Serv. Go thou ; I 'll fetch some flax, and whites of
eggs,
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help
him ! [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An open country.**Enter EDGAR.*

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be condemn'd,
Than still condemn'd and flatter'd To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear :
The lamentable change is from the best ;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace !
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.—But who comes here ?

Enter GLOSTER, led by an Old Man.

My father, poorly led ? World, world, O world !
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord, I have been your tenant,
and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glo. Away, get thee away ; good friend, be gone ;
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,
Then they may hurt.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes ;
I stumbled when I saw : Full oft 't is seen
Our means secure us ;^a and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. O, dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath !

^a *Our means secure us.* We believe that *means* is here used only in the common sense of resources, powers, capacities. The *means*, such as we possess, are our securities, and further, our mere defects prove advantages.

Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say, I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now? Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! who is 't can say, "I am at
the worst?"

I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'T is poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: The worst
is not

So long as we can say, "This is the worst."

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glo. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm; my son
Came then into my mind: and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more
since:

As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;

They kill us for their sport.

Edg. How should this be?

Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others. [*Aside.*—Bless thee,
master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Get thee away: If, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Which I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he's mad.

Glo. 'T is the times' plague, when madmen lead the
blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on 't what will. [Exit.]

Glo. Sirrah, naked fellow.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.—I cannot daub it further.
[Aside.]

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [Aside.] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet
eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and footpath.
Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: Bless
thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! Five fiends
have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as *Obidicut*;
Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; *Mahu*, of stealing;
Modo, of murder; *Flibbertigibbet*, of mopping and
mowing; who since possesses chamber-maids and wait-
ing-women. So, bless thee, master!

Glo. Here, take this purse, you whom the heaven's
plagues

Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched,
Makes thee the happier:—Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm.

Poor Tom shall lead thee. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND ; Steward meeting them.

Gon. Welcome, my lord : I marvel, our mild husband

Not met us on the way :—Now, where 's your master ?

Stew. Madam, within ; but never man so chang'd :
I told him of the army that was landed ;
He smil'd at it : I told him, you were coming ;
His answer was, "The worse:" of Gloster's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot ;
And told me, I had turn'd the wrong side out :—
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him ;
What like, offensive.

Gon. Then shall you go no further. [*To EDMUND.*
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake : he 'll not feel wrongs,
Which tie him to an answer : Our wishes, on the way,
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother ;
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers :
I must change names at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us : ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this ; spare speech ;

[*Giving a favour.*]

Decline your head : this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air ;—
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloster ! [*Exit EDMUND.*
O, the difference of man and man !
To thee a woman's services are due ;
My fool usurps my body.

Stew. Madam, here comes my lord. [*Exit Stew.*

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb.

O Goneril!

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face.—I fear your disposition :
That nature, which contemns its origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself ;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither,
And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more ; the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile :
Filth savour but themselves. What have you done ?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd ?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would
lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate ! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it ?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited ?
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
'T will come :
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.

Gon.

Milk-liver'd man !

That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs ;
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering ; that not know'st,
Fools do those villains pity, who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum ?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land :
With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats :
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sitt'st still, and cry'st
" Alack ! why does he so ? "

Alb.

See thyself, devil !

Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were it my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones :—Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now!—

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O, my good lord, the duke of Cornwall 's dead :
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master ; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead :
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge!—but, O, poor Gloster!
Lost he his other eye?

Mess. Both, both, my lord.—
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer ;
'T is from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well ;
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life : Another way,
The news is not so tart.—I 'll read, and answer. [*Ex.*

Alb. Where was his son, when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord: 't was he inform'd against him;

And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloster, I live

To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,

And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend;

Tell me what more thou know'st. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*The French Camp, near Dover.*

Enter KENT and a Gentleman.

Kent. Why the king of France is so suddenly gone
back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which
since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to
the kingdom so much fear and danger, that his personal
return was most required, and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Mareschal of France, Monsieur Le Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any de-
monstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir, she took them, read them in my pre-
sence;

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek; it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her.

Gent. Not to a rage; patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better day: Those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know

What guests were in her eyes ; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.—In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question ?

Gent. 'Faith, once, or twice, she heav'd the name of
" father "

Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart ;
Cried, " Sisters ; sisters !—shame of ladies ! sisters !
Kent ! father ! sisters ! What ? i' the storm ? i' the night ?
Let pity not be believ'd !"—There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd :—then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions ;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since ?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the king return'd ?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir : The poor distress'd Lear is i' the
town :

Who sometimes, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir ?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him : his own
unkindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters,—these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman !

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard
not ?

Gent. 'T is so; they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master, Lear,
And leave you to attend him : some dear cause^a
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The same. A Tent.*

Enter CORDELIA, Physician, and Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 't is he; why he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea : singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter, and furrow weeds,
With harlocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.—A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. What can man's wisdom
[*Exit an Officer.*

In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him, take all my outward worth.

Phy. There is means, madam :
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant, and remediate,
In the good man's distress!—Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam :
The British powers are marching hitherward.

^a *Dear cause*—important business.

Cor. 'T is known before ; our preparation stands
 In expectation of them.—O dear father,
 It is thy business that I go about ;
 Therefore great France
 My mourning, and important tears, hath pitied.
 No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
 But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right :
 Soon may I hear and see him ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room in Gloster's Castle.*

Enter REGAN and Steward.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth ?

Stew.

Ay, madam.

Reg.

Himself

In person there ?

Stew. Madam, with much ado :

Your sister is the better soldier.

Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home ?

Stew. No, madam.

Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him ?

Stew. I know not, lady.

Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.

It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,

To let him live ; where he arrives he moves

All hearts against us ; Edmund, I think, is gone,

In pity of his misery, to despatch

His nighted life ; moreover, to descry

The strength o' the enemy.

Stew. I must needs after him, madam, with my
 letter.

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow ; stay with us ;
 The ways are dangerous.

Stew. I may not, madam ;

My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund ? Might
 not you

Transport her purposes by words? Belike,
Something—I know not what :—I 'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.

Stew. Madam, I had rather—

Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband ;
I am sure of that : and, at her late being here,
She gave strange œiliads, and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund : I know you are of her bosom.

Stew. I, madam?

Reg. I speak in understanding ; you are, I know it :
Therefore, I do advise you, take this note :
My lord is dead ; Edmund and I have talk'd ;
And more convenient is he for my hand,
Than for your lady's :—You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this ;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So fare you well.

If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

Stew. 'Would I could meet him, madam ! I would
show

What party I do follow.

Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*The country near Dover.*

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR dressed like a peasant.

Glo. When shall we come to the top of that same
hill ?

Edg. You do climb up it now : look how we labour.

Glo. Methinks, the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible steep :

Hark, do you hear the sea ?

Glo. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.

Glo. So may it be, indeed :
Methinks thy voice is alter'd ; and thou speak'st
In better phrase, and matter, than thou didst.

Edg. You are much deceiv'd ; in nothing am I
chang'd,
But in my garments.

Glo. Methinks, you are better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir ; here 's the place !—stand still.—
How fearful

And dizzy 't is, to cast one's eyes so low !
The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce so gross as beetles : Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire ; dreadful trade !
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head :
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice : and yon' tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock ; " her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight : the murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high :—I 'll look no more ;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

Glo. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand : you are now within a
foot

Of the extreme verge : for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

Glo. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, is another purse ; in it, a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking : Fairies, and gods,
Prosper it with thee ! Go thou further off ;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare you well, good sir. [*Seems to go.*

Glo. With all my heart.

* *The cock boat.* The "anchoring bark" has a small boat towing, and, as the bark was diminished to a cock, the cock was a buoy "almost too small for sight."

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair,
Is done to cure it.

Glo. O you mighty gods !
This world I do renounce ; and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off :
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him !—
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Gone, sir.^a Farewell.—

[*GLOSTER leaps, and falls along.*

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft : Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.—Alive or dead ?
Ho, you sir ! friend !—Hear you, sir ?—speak !
Thus might he pass indeed :—Yet he revives :
What are you, sir ?

Glo. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers,
air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou hadst shiver'd like an egg : but thou dost breathe ;
Hast heavy substance ; bleed'st not ; speak'st ; art sound.
Ten masts at each^b make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell ;
Thy life 's a miracle : Speak yet again.

Glo. But have I fallen, or no ?

^a *Gone, sir.* This is ordinarily printed, *gone, sir ?* as if Edgar asked Gloster if he had gone ; whereas Gloster has previously told him, "go thou further off ;" and when Gloster again speaks to him, he says, *gone, sir.*

^b *Ten masts at each* may signify each placed at the end of the other. Some think, however, that there is a slight typographical error, and that we should read *ten masts at reach.* We can find no example of a similar use of *at each* ; and yet the phrase conveys the meaning.

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn :^a
Look up a-height ;—the shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard : do but look up.

Glo. Alack, I have no eyes.—
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death ? 'T was yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.

Edg. Give me your arm :
Up :—so ;—How is 't ? Feel you your legs ? You
stand.

Glo. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness :
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you ?

Glo. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons ; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd, and wav'd like the enridged sea ;
It was some fiend : Therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Glo. I do remember now : henceforth I 'll bear
Affliction, till it do cry out itself,
Enough, enough, and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man ; often 't would say,
" The fiend, the fiend : " he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts.—But who
comes here ?

Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed up with flowers.

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

^a *Bourn.* In a previous passage, " Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me," bourn signifies a river. The "chalky bourn" in the passage before us is the chalky boundary of England towards France.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining;^a
I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect.—There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper:^b draw me a clothier's yard.^c—Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace;—this piece of toasted cheese will do't.—There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant.—Bring up the brown bills.^d—O, well-flown, bird!—i' the clout, i' the clout: hewgh!—Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril!—with a white beard!—They flatter'd me like a dog; and told me I had the white hairs in my beard, ere the black ones were there. To say ay, and no, to everything I said.—Ay and no too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found them, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was everything; 't is a lie; I am not ague-proof.

Glo. The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is 't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:

^a *For coining.* If we follow the course of Lear's thoughts we shall see that he fancies himself a king at the head of his army. It is his prerogative to coin money—"they cannot touch me for coining." New levies are brought to him—"There's your press-money."

^b *The crow-keeper* was the rustic who kept crows from corn—one unpractised in the proper use of the bow.

^c *Draw me a clothier's yard*—draw like a famous English archer,—the archer of Chevy Chase;—

"An arrow of a cloth yard long
Up to the head drew he."

^d *The brown bills*—bills for billmen, the infantry.

When I do stare, see, how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life : What was thy cause ?—
Adultery ?—

Thou shalt not die : Die for adultery ! No :
The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.

Let copulation thrive, for Gloster's bastard son
Was kinder to his father, than my daughters
Got 'twween the lawful sheets.

To 't, luxury, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers.—
Behold yon' simpering dame,

Whose face between her forks presageth snow ;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name ;

The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
With a more riotous appetite.

Down from the waist they are centaurs, though women
all above : but to the girdle do the gods inherit, beneath
is all the fiends' ; there 's hell, there 's darkness, there is
the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consump-
tion :—Fye, fye, fye ! pah ; pah ! Give me an ounce
of civet ; good apothecary, sweeten my imagination :
there 's money for thee.

Glo. O let me kiss that hand !

Lear. Let me wipe it first ; it smells of mortality.

Glo. O ruin'd piece of nature ! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought.—Dost thou know me ?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost
thou squiny at me ? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid ;
I 'll not love.—Read thou this challenge ; mark but
the penning of it.

Glo. Were all thy letters suns, I could not see.

Edg. I would not take this from report ;—it is,
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glo. What, with the case of eyes ?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me ? No eyes in

your hand, nor ~~the~~ money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: Yet you see how this world goes.

Glo. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: Change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glo. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.—

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand:
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the
cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots:—harder, harder; so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester;
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither.
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl, and cry:—I will preach to thee; mark.

Glo. Alack, alack the day!

Lear. When we are born, we cry, that we are come
To this great stage of fools;—This a good block!—^a
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put it in proof;
And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.^b

Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is; lay hand upon him.—Sir,
Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune.—Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons,
I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have anything.

Lear. No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man, a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and for laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir,—

Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom;
What?

I will be jovial; come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in't. Come, an you get it,
you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[*Exit running; Attendants follow.*]

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch;
Past speaking of in a king!—Thou hast a daughter,

^a *This a good block!* Steevens conjectures that, when Lear says, "I will preach to thee," and begins his sermon, "When we are born, we cry," he takes his hat in his hand, and, turning it round, dislikes the fashion or shape of it, which was then called the *block*. He then starts off, by association with the hat, to the delicate stratagem of shoeing a troop of horse with felt.

^b *Kill* was the ancient word of onset in the English army.

Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you : What's your will ?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward ?

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar : every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army ?

Gent. Near, and on speedy foot ; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thank you, sir ; that's all.

Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*]

Glo. You ever gentle gods, take my breath from me ;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please !

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glo. Now, good sir, what are you ?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's
blows ;

Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.

Glo. Hearty thanks :

The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot !

Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize ! Most happy !
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes.—Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember :—The sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it.

[*EDGAR opposes.*
2 A 2

Stew. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Ch'ill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

Stew. Let go, slave, or thou diest.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor
volk pass. And ch'ud ha' been zwagger'd out of my
life, 't would not ha' been so long as 't is by a vortnight.
Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor'ye,
or ise try whether your costard or my ballow^a be the
harder: Ch'ill be plain with you.

Stew. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Ch'ill pick your teeth, zir: Come; no matter vor
your foins. [*They fight; and Edg. knocks him down.*]

Stew. Slave, thou hast slain me:—Villain, take my
purse;

If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,
To Edmund earl of Gloster; seek him out
Upon the English party:—O, untimely death. [*Dies.*]

Edg. I know thee well: A serviceable villain;
As dutious to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Glo. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.—

Let's see these pockets: the letters that he speaks of,
May be my friends.—He is dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man.—Let us see:—
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads.*] "Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You
have many opportunities to cut him off; if your will want not."

^a *Ballow.* Grose, in his 'Provincial Glossary,' gives *ballow*
as a north-country word for *pole*. Edgar is speaking the Somers-
setshire dialect.

time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done if he returns the conqueror; then am I the prisoner, and his bed my jail; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

"Your (wife, as I would say) affectionate servant,
"GONZAIL."

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!—
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange, my brother!—Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers; and, in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd duke: For him 't is well,
That of thy death and business I can tell.

[Exit EDGAR, dragging out the body.]

Glo. The king is mad: How stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs;
And woes, by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.

Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Give me your hand:
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VII.—A Tent in the French Camp. LEAR
on a Bed, asleep; Physician, Gentlemen, and others,
attending.

Enter CORDELIA and KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited ^a
 These weeds are memories of those worse hours;
 I prithee put them off.

Kent. Pardon, dear madam:
 Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
 My boon I make it that you know me not,
 Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be it so, my good lord. How does the
 King? [To the Physician.

Phys. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,
 Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
 The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up,
 Of this child-changed father!

Phys. So please your majesty,
 That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
 I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of sleep,
 We put fresh garments on him.

Phys. Be by, good madam, when we do awake
 him;

I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Very well.

Phys. Please you, draw near.—Louder the music
 there.

Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
 Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
 Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
 Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
 Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
 To be oppos'd against the jarring winds?
 To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder;
 In the most terrible and nimble stroke

^a Suited—clothed.

Of quick, cross-lightning? to watch (poor perdu!)
 With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
 Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
 Against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father,
 To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
 In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
 'T is wonder, that thy life and wits at once
 Had not concluded all.—He wakes; speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you; 't is fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your
 majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o' the
 grave:—

Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
 Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
 Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know: When did you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide! °

Phys. He 's scarce awake; let him alone awhile.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I?—Fair
 day-light?—

I am mightily abus'd.—I should e'en die with pity,
 To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—
 I will not swear these are my hands:—let 's see;
 I feel this pin prick. 'Would I were assur'd
 Of my condition.

Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
 And hold your hand in benediction o'er me:—
 No, sir, you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
 I am a very foolish fond old man,
 Fourscore and upward; not an hour more nor less: °

° That most Shaksperian touch of nature—

“Fourscore and upward; not an hour more nor less”—
 has been mutilated by the modern editors. Malone says, “The
 folio absurdly adds, ‘not an hour more nor less,’ i.e., not an hour

And, to deal plainly,
 I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
 Methinks I should know you, and know this man ;
 Yet I am doubtful : for I am mainly ignorant
 What place this is : and all the skill I have
 Remembers not these garments ; nor I know not
 Where I did lodge last night : Do not laugh at me ;
 For, as I am a man, I think this lady
 To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Lear. Be your tears wet ? Yes, 'faith. I pray, weep
 not :

If you have poison for me I will drink it.
 I know you do not love me ; for your sisters
 Have, as I do remember, done me wrong :
 You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France ?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam : the great rage,
 You see, is kill'd in him : and yet it is danger
 To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
 Desire him to go in ; trouble him no more,
 Till further settling.

Cor. Will 't please your highness walk ?

Lear. You must bear with me :
 Pray you now, forget and forgive : I am old and foolish.

[*Exeunt LEAR, COR., PHYS., and Attendants.*]

Gent. Holds it true, sir,
 That the duke of Cornwall was so slain ?

more nor less than an indeterminate number, for such is four-score and upwards." Why, who is speaking ? One who speaks logically and collectedly ? No ! one who immediately after says, "I fear I am not in my perfect mind." It was the half-consciousness of the "foolish, good old man" which Shakspeare meant to express by the mixture of a determinate and an indeterminate idea.

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 't is said,

The bastard son of Gloster.

Gent. They say, Edgar,
His banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent
In Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable.
'T is time to look about ; the powers o' the kingdom
Approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody.
Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well, or ill, as this day's battle 's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover.*

Enter, with drums and colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, and others.

Edm. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold :
Or whether, since, he is advis'd by aught
To change the course : He 's full of alteration,
And self-reproving :—bring his constant pleasure.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*]

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'T is to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you :
Tell me,—but truly,—but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister ?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forefended place ?

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her : Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not :—

She, and the duke her husband,—

Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, and Soldiers.

Gon. I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me. [Aside]

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be met.—
Sir, this I heard,—The king is come to his daughter,

With others, whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king; with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy:
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.

Alb. Let's then determine with the ancient of war
On our proceeding.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'T is most convenient; pray you go with us.

Gon. O, ho, I know the riddle: [*Aside.*] I will go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR, disguised.

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll overtake you.—Speak.

[*Exeunt EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL, Officers,
Soldiers, and Attendants.*]

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion, that will prove
What is avouched there: if you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again. [*Exit.*]

Alb. Why, fare thee well; I will o'erlook thy paper

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy 's in view, draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery :—but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*]

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love ;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?
Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive : To take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;
And hardly shall I carry out my side
Her husband being alive. Now then, we 'll use
His countenance for the battle ; which being done
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon : for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit*]

SCENE II.—*A Field between the two Camps.*

*Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, LEAR,
CORDELIA, and their Forces ; and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
If ever I return to you again,
I 'll bring you comfort.

Glo. Grace go with you, sir ! [*Exit EDG.*]

Alarums ; afterwards a retreat. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man, give me thy hand, away ;
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand, come on.

Glo. No further, sir ; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
Ripeness is all : Come on.

Glo. And that 's true too. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The British Camp near Dover.*

*Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, EDMUND ;
LEAR and CORDELIA, as prisoners ; Officers, Sol-
diers, &c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away : good guard ;
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.

Cor. We are not the first,
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, I am cast down ;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.—
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters ?

Lear. No, no, no, no ! Come, let 's away to prison ;
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage :
When thou dost ask me blessing, I 'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness : So we 'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news ; and we 'll talk with them too,—
Who loses, and who wins : who 's in, who 's out,
And take upon us the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies : and we 'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught
thee ?

He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven
And fire us hence, like foxes. Wipe thine eyes ;

The good years shall devour them, flesh and fell,^a
Ere they shall make us weep; we'll see them starve
first.

Come. [*Exeunt LEAR and CORDELIA, guarded.*]

Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.

Take thou this note; [*giving a paper*] go, follow them
to prison;

One step I have advanc'd thee: if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes: Know thou this,—that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword:—Thy great employment
Will not bear question;—either say, thou 'lt do 't,
Or thrive by other means.

Off. I'll do 't, my lord.

Edm. About it; and write happy, when thou hast
done.

Mark,—I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.

Off. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work I will do it. [*Exit Officer.*]

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers,
and Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: You have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
I do require them of you, so to use them,
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;

^a Fell—skin.

My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cur'd
By those that feel their sharpness:—
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That 's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.

Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most if he should husband you.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.

Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach.—General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good-will.

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.

Reg. Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
To EDWARD.

Alb. Stay yet; hear reason: Edmund, I arrest thee
 On capital treason; and, in thy arrest,
 This gilded serpent: [*Pointing to Gon.*—for your
 claim, fair sister,
 I bar it in the interest of my wife;
 'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
 And I, her husband, contradict your banns.
 If you will marry make your loves to me,
 My lady is bespoke.

Gon. An interlude.

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster:—Let the trumpet sound:
 If none appear to prove upon thy person,
 Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
 There is my pledge; [*Throwing down a glove.*] I'll
 make it on thy heart,
 Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
 Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick, O, sick!

Gon. If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine. [*Aside.*

Edm. There's my exchange: [*Throwing down a
 glove.*] what in the world he is
 That names me traitor, villain-like he lies;
 Call by the trumpet: he that dares approach,
 On him, on you, (who not?) I will maintain
 My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
 All levied in my name, have in my name
 Took their discharge.

Reg. My sickness grows upon me.

Enter a Herald.

Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.

[*Exit REGAN, led.*
 Come hither, herald,—Let the trumpet sound,—
 And read out this.

Off. Sound, trumpet! [*A trumpet sounds.*

Herald reads.

If any man of quality or degree, within the limits of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence.

Edm. Sound!

Her. Again.

Her. Again.

{ 1 Trumpet.

{ 2 Trumpet.

{ 3 Trumpet.

[Trumpet answers within

Enter EDGAR armed, preceded by a trumpet.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

Her.

What are you?

Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edg.

Know, my name is lost:

By treason's tooth bare gnawn, and canker-bit:

Yet am I noble, as the adversary

I come to cope withal.

Alb.

Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund earl of
Gloucester?

Edm. Himself;—What say'st thou to him?

Edg.

Draw thy sword,

That, if my speech offend a noble heart,

Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.

Behold, it is my privilege,

The privilege of mine honours,

My oath, and my profession; I protest,—

Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,

Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,

Thy valour, and thy heart,—thou art a traitor:

False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;

Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;

And, from the extremest upward of thy head,

To the descent and dust below thy feet,

A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou, "No,"

This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say^a of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay,
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which, (for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,)
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever.—Trumpets, speak.

[*Alarums. They fight. EDMUND falls*]

Alb. Save him, save him!

Gon. This is practice, Gloucester:
By the law of war,^b thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it:—hold, air:—
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:—
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

[*Gives the letter to EDMUND.*]

Gon. Say, if I do: the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for 't? [Exit GONERIL.]

Alb. Most monstrous!

Know'st thou this paper?

Edm. Ask me not what I know.

Alb. Go after ~~him~~: she's desperate; govern her.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*]

Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done,
And more, much more: the time will bring it out;
'T is past, and so am I: But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou art noble
I do forgive thee.

^a *Say—essay.*

^b *War—the quaitos, arms.*

Edg. Let's exchange charity.
 I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund ;
 If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
 My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
 The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
 Make instruments to plague us :
 The dark and vicious place where thee he got
 Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 't is true ;
 The wheel is come full circle ; I am here.

Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
 A royal nobleness :—I must embrace thee ;
 Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
 Did hate thee, or thy father !

Edg. Worthy prince, I know 't.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself ?
 How have you known the miseries of your father ?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord.—List a brief tale :—
 And when 't is told, O, that my heart would burst !—
 The bloody proclamation to escape
 That follow'd me so near, (O our lives' sweetness !—
 That we the pain of death would hourly die,
 Rather than die at once !) taught me to shift
 Into a mad-man's rags ; to assume a semblance
 That very dogs disdain'd : and in this habit
 Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
 Their precious stones new lost ; became his guide,
 Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair ;
 Never (O fault !) reveal'd myself unto him,
 Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd ;
 Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
 I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
 Told him our pilgrimage : but his flaw'd heart,
 (Alack, too weak the conflict to support !)
 Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,

And shall, perchance, do good : but speak you on ;
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more, more woful, hold it in ;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.

Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow ; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour, came there in a man,
Who, having seen me in my worse estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society ; but then, finding
Who 't was that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he 'd burst heaven ; threw him on my father ;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,
That ever ear receiv'd : which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack : Twice then the trumpet sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.

Alb. But who was this ?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent ; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman hastily, with a bloody knife.

Gent. Help ! help ! O help !

Edg. What kind of help ?

Alb. Speak, man.

Edg. What means this bloody knife ?

Gent. 'T is hot, it smokes ;
It came even from the heart of—O she 's dead.

Alb. Who dead ? speak, man.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady : and her sister
By her is poison'd ; she confesses it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both ; all three
Now marry in an instant.

Edg. Here comes Kent.

Alb. Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead!—
This judgment of the heavens that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

Enter Kent.

O, is this he?
The time will not allow the compliment,
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night;
Is he not here?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot!—
Speak, Edmund, where 's the king; and where 's Cordelia?

See'st thou this object, Kent?

[*The bodies of GON. and REGAN are brought in.*]

Kent. Alack, why thus?

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so.—Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life: Some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,—
Be brief in it,—to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia:—
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run, O, run—

Edg. To who, my lord?—Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on; take my sword,
Give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Ex. EDMOND.*]

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she spreadid herself.

* The quarto, O! it is he.

Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.
[*EDMUND is borne off.*]

Enter LEAR, with CORDELIA dead in his arms :
EDGAR, Officer, and others.

Lear. Howl, howl, howl!—O, you are men of stones;
Had I your tongues and eyes I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack:—She's gone for
ever!—

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth:—Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end?*

Edg. Or image of that horror?

Alb. Fall and cease!

Lear. This feather stirs; she lives; if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. O my good master! [*Kneeling.*]

Lear. Prithee, away.

Edg. 'T is noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her; now she's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha!
What is 't thou say'st?—Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low; an excellent thing in woman:—
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.

Off. 'T is true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?

I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best:—I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.

* *The promis'd end*—the end of the world foretold in the Scriptures. The "image of that horror" is the same as "the great doom's image" of *Macbeth*.

Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same;

Your servant Kent: Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too: He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man;—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else; all's cheerless, dark, and
deadly.—

Your eldest daughters have fore-don^a themselves,
And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Alb. He knows not what he says; and vain it is
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here.—

You lords, and noble friends, know our intent.

What comfort to this great decay may come

Shall be applied: For us, we will resign,

During the life of this old majesty,

To him our absolute power:—You, to your rights;

[*To EDGAR and KENT.*

With boot, and such addition as your honours

Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste

The wages of their virtue, and all foes

The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd!^b No, no, no life:

^a *Fore-don.* We have previously had *for-did* used in the same sense of destroy.

^b *And my poor fool is hang'd.* We cannot avoid thinking that Shakspeare, in this place, meant to express a peculiar tenderness, derived from Lear's confused recollection of his regard for his poor follower, the Fool, whom we have lost after the

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou 'lt come no more.
Never, never, never, never, never!—

Pray you undo this button: Thank you, sir.—

Do you see this? Look on her,—look,—her lips,—

Look there, look there! *[He dies.]*

Edg. He faints! My lord, my lord,—

Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates
him

That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

Kent. The wonder is he hath endur'd so long:
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence.—Our present business
Is general woe. Friends of my soul, you twain
[To KENT and EDGAR.]

Rule in this realm, and the good state sustain.

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me,—I must not say, no.

Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[Exeunt with a dead march.]

third act. In the depth of his distress, during the storm, Lear says—"Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart that's sorry yet for thee." And now, when the last and deepest calamity has fallen upon him, his expressions shape themselves out of the indistinctness with which he views the present and the past, and Cordelia is his "poor fool."

* This is the original stage direction.

END OF KING LEAR.

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